PUNISHMENT

By LOUISE BURLEIGH

and EDWARD HALE BIERSTADT

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PUNISHMENT

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

BY

LOUISE BURLEIGH

AND

EDWARD HALE BIERSTADT

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

THOMAS MOTT OSBORNE

NEW YORK

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1916

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BY

LOUISE BURLEIGH

AND

EDWARD HALE BIERSTADT

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THIS PLAY IS DEDICATED

TO

THOMAS BROWN, AUBURN NO. 33,333X

WITH THE

AFFECTION AND ADMIRATION

OF THE AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION

TO write a truthful and effective play in which certain characters shall be criminals or ex-convicts is a difficult task, even for an experienced dramatist; for while the psychology of the prisoner is not fundamentally different from that of other men, yet he has lived under such abnormal conditions,—conditions so compelling, that it is hard even for the most practised student of human nature to comprehend his point of view. Fully to understand the convict one must go to prison; and few dramatists are eager to do that.

Still more difficult is it to write a play dealing with the actual life of the prison; for the task of making the plot deal with real prison material and yet make the facts seem both true and interesting to an audience, is almost insuperable. Many of the important details of prison life are certainly not agreeable, and in a drama would hardly seem credible.

The authors of *Punishment* have succeeded to a very remarkable degree. They have caught the prison atmosphere; they have woven into

their dramatic scheme a number of actual occurrences and have made them appear plausible and convincing. There is nothing strained or improbable in the development of their plot. Out of truthful material they have made a most interesting play. To have succeeded in doing this is an achievement.

I can vouch for the accuracy of the prison life depicted in *Punishment.* I have seen something of that life, so close to the lives of all of us and yet so inconceivably remote, both from the side of the prisoner and from the side of the prison official; and I think I should be quick to detect a false note. To me *Punishment* rings true; just as in a different field and dealing with quite another branch of the problem Galsworthy's *Justice* rings true. *Punishment* is worthy of a place beside that bitter masterpiece.

There are those to whom realism means nothing that is not disagreeable; but to my mind not the least of the merits of this play is that it closes on a major chord. Fortunately a prison play can now do that and yet remain truthful; that is where the American has the advantage over the English dramatist. The authors of *Punishment* have caught the spirit of our new American penology; and have not only written an important play, but one that must

aid in bringing home to the public a great truth: that it is impossible to solve the problem of crime and imprisonment through brutality and disregard of the human nature of the convict,—but that it can be solved by means of sympathy and understanding. To aid in bringing that great truth home to the public, by means of the drama, is an important service.

THOMAS MOTT OSBORNE.

PUNISHMENT

PERSONS OF THE PLAY

IN THE ORDER OF THEIR ENTRANCE

MARY CALVIN. . . .	*wife of* JOHN CALVIN
MARTIN	*a convict; butler to the Warden*
JOHN CALVIN . . .	*Warden of Riverside Prison*
KING	*Principal Keeper of the prison; known as the P. K.*
STEPHEN CASEY . . .	*politician, and coal contractor*
MRS. MOYNE	*mother of* DANIEL MOYNE
DANIEL MOYNE . . .	*a convict*
SCOTT	*a keeper*
JACK WILSON . . .	*a convict*
JOE RUFFIO	*a convict*
FRANCIS	*a keeper*

The action of the play takes place at Riverside Prison, somewhere in the United States, and covers a period of two weeks. The time is the present.

THE SCENES OF THE PLAY

ACT I. The living-room of the Warden's quarters.
Late afternoon in Spring.

ACT II. The punishment cells; also known as the dark cells, or the cooler.
Night and morning of the following Friday and Saturday.

ACT III. The Warden's office.
Ten days later, in the evening.

ACT IV. The same.
A few hours later; early morning.

ACT I

THE Warden's quarters in Riverside Prison consist of grim rooms, decorated by persons of more than ordinary bad taste, some fifty years ago. The living-room, however, is relieved by indications of a woman's presence. A chaise longue has been drawn up before the fire on the right. Flowers are standing in a good vase on the table, as well as a work box.

Right and Left, doors lead to the prison offices, and to the other rooms of the Warden's establishment: these latter are double doors, and reveal a flight of stairs.

At the back, through large windows, the cell-block is visible.

MRS. CALVIN *is lying on the chaise longue. She has been reading, but the light has grown too dim for her to see, and she lies back with her eyes on the fire.* MRS. CALVIN *is a slender woman, nearing forty, reminding one of a flame,—held in continual leash,—or of a sheathed sword. She is dark, and is dressed in a simple house frock of crepe, unrelieved except at the throat and wrist. About her neck, on a long chain, a miniature, in a locket,*

hangs over the edge of the couch until it touches the floor. She draws a long breath and closes her eyes as if she were very tired.

From outside comes the sound of voices—shouts and orders, and the pandemonium of men yelling and bawling. MRS. CALVIN *starts nervously. She sits up and listens intently, and then goes to the window at the back where she tries to peer through the gloom of twilight. As she watches, the lights in the cell-block are flashed on and the noise grows in volume. Evidently she can see nothing, for she continues to listen even after she has come back to the center of the room. Then, with sudden determination, she moves to the bell and rings. She switches on the lights and stands waiting.*

MARTIN *enters through the double doors.* MARTIN *is a convict, dressed in a neat, white linen jacket, with trousers of prison gray, ill-made and shapeless, and with clumsy prison-made shoes. His manner alternates between the poised respect of a trained servant, and a crude good nature which is his birthright. He has always, however, the repression which his life in prison has wrought upon him. His hair is almost white.*

MARTIN. Yes, Madam? You rang?

MRS. CALVIN. Is anything wrong, Martin? In the prison?

MARTIN. No, Madam. They're bringing the men's supper to the cells. That's all.

MRS. CALVIN. But this disturbance?

MARTIN. They've been locked in since Saturday noon. Makes 'em hard to manage.

[*From this moment the noise decreases rapidly.*

MRS. CALVIN. Saturday, Sunday, and Monday—in those unspeakable cells.

MARTIN. It's bad when a holiday comes on Monday like this, and they're locked in till Tuesday morning. . . . I don't wonder they fight.

MRS. CALVIN. [*quickly.*] There has been a fight?

MARTIN. Two men in one cell. They. . . .

MRS. CALVIN. Yes?

MARTIN. [*naïvely.*] Say, I hadn't ought to be talking to you like this! I forgot all you taught me.

MRS. CALVIN. Never mind. Tell me.

MARTIN. They'd been drinking. The row kind of got the rest of the men going. [MRS. CALVIN *turns away with an involuntary movement.*] It's the way it happens when they've been locked in. Sunday is bad enough, but when Monday's a holiday and the shops are shut. . . .

MRS. CALVIN. Is Mr. Calvin in the prison, Martin?

MARTIN. The Warden was in his office a while ago. [*He starts toward the door.*] Shall I see?

MRS. CALVIN. [*quickly.*] No. . . . Thank you, Martin.

[MARTIN *watches her for a moment, and then returns to his post by the door again, like a well trained servant.*

MARTIN. Was there anything else, Madam?

MRS. CALVIN. [*turning, and looking at him with a smile.*] Martin, you have learned very quickly.

MARTIN. Thank you, Madam.

MRS. CALVIN. In the six weeks the Warden and I have been here, you've become very careful in your way of speaking to me, and to Mr. Calvin.

MARTIN. Thank you kindly, Mrs. Calvin. I . . . nobody never took interest in me like you have, Madam.

MRS. CALVIN. You are an apt student.

MARTIN. [*embarrassed.*] I'll be sorry to leave you . . . when . . .

MRS. CALVIN. Your term is almost over, isn't it?

MARTIN. [*his face alight.*] In two weeks, Madam.

MRS. CALVIN. What shall you do? Have you a family?

MARTIN. [*shakes his head.*] My daughter died last year, Madam.

MRS. CALVIN. Friends? Someone who will take you in until you find a position?

MARTIN. [*with a wintry smile.*] A man's friends don't remember him that long . . . sixteen years. Since my girl died I ain't had even a visitor.

MRS. CALVIN. What position would you like best?

MARTIN. Any decent job.

MRS. CALVIN. I've been thinking about you, Martin. You are a good butler. If you had been in my service at home, I should give you a good recommendation. [MARTIN *starts to speak.*] So why not, now? I have friends who would . . .

MARTIN. You'd take the chance?

MRS. CALVIN. I trust you. We've been good friends, Martin, and when you leave us, I want you to go on feeling that I *am* your friend.

MARTIN. I'll do that. I want to go straight.

MRS. CALVIN. Of course you do. And you will.

MARTIN. May heaven reward you . . . Madam.

MRS. CALVIN. [*smiling.*] Heaven will.

[CALVIN *speaks outside.*

CALVIN. I expect him in twenty minutes.

[*A door closes outside.* MRS. CALVIN *smiles at* MARTIN, *and turns back to her couch.*

MRS. CALVIN. I'll write to-day. We will find you something.

[MARTIN *accepts the dismissal in her voice and starts out, into the inner rooms.* CALVIN *enters from the office. He is a big man, sparely built, with iron gray hair, and steel blue eyes. In moments of passion or excitement these eyes seem lit with blue fire. His mouth is keenly sensitive, but years of warfare with himself have set it in rather hard, grim lines. His movements are quick and nervous. Altogether, he looks the Scotsman he is. He is between forty-five and fifty years old.*

CALVIN. My house-coat, Martin.

MARTIN. Yes, sir. [*Exit through double doors.*]

CALVIN. [*going at once to his wife's side.*] Your head is better, my dear?

MRS. CALVIN. Thank you, much better, John.

CALVIN. I'm glad of that. I'm going to have

dinner served half an hour later to-night—unless you mind?

MRS. CALVIN. Can't the prison spare you to me for one meal a day?

CALVIN. That's just it; I want to dine with you. But before that I must keep an appointment with Mr. Casey—he will be leaving at seven-fifteen.

MRS. CALVIN. Is Mr. Casey a member of the Prison Commission?

[CALVIN *shakes his head.*

MRS. CALVIN. Then why does he come here so often?

CALVIN. To-day he comes at my request.

MRS. CALVIN. But he's always appearing.

CALVIN. He was a friend of my predecessor, and so got the habit, I fancy. Besides, he's been furnishing coal to the prison for the last four years.

MRS. CALVIN. I distrust him.

CALVIN. Frankly, I suspect, myself, that he's making a very good thing out of the coal.

[MARTIN *comes in with the house-coat.* CALVIN *slips into it with a nod.*

CALVIN. Serve dinner at seven-thirty, Martin.

MARTIN. Yes, sir. [*He goes out, taking the coat* CALVIN *has discarded.*]

MRS. CALVIN. [*with a half smile.*] This official household! I can't make it seem anything but odd for you to be housekeeper.

CALVIN. It could not be arranged otherwise, Mary. A woman can't be expected to control convicts.

MRS. CALVIN. What about Martin?

CALVIN. Martin is an isolated case where your personal influence. . . .

MRS. CALVIN. [*smiles at him.*] You have to confess he is improved!

CALVIN. Temporarily. But no sooner will he leave your influence than back he'll go.

MRS. CALVIN. I don't intend that he shall. The Masons are in need of a butler.

CALVIN. You'd ask them to take a convict?

MRS. CALVIN. I ask them to take Martin.

CALVIN. [*growing stern.*] I wish I could make you look at these men without sentimentality.

MRS. CALVIN. I look at them with humanity—that's all. They are all human beings, with the same limitations and possibilities as the rest of us.

[CALVIN *turns away as if dismissing the subject.* MRS. CALVIN, *following her thoughts, draws the chain about her*

neck through her fingers until she touches the miniature. The locket flies open in her hand. Her face whitens, and her lips grow tense. For a long moment she is silent, quivering with pain.

[*From the window* CALVIN *speaks casually.*

CALVIN. The men are unruly to-day. But the Principal Keeper tells me it's always so when they are kept in their cells from Saturday noon over Sunday and Monday. . . . You heard them getting their supper?

[MRS. CALVIN *does not even hear him. She is looking in the fire with the open locket still in her hand.* CALVIN *turns, and when he sees her his face sets. He takes a step toward her, and speaks with bitter reproach.*

CALVIN. Mary!

[MRS. CALVIN *starts and her eyes fill with involuntary tears. She snaps the cover of the locket.*

MRS. CALVIN. Yes? [CALVIN *with a gesture of displeasure, turning back to the window, stands silent.*] You asked me something, John? Forgive me.

CALVIN. [*in a hard tone.*] You heard the disturbance?

MRS. CALVIN. A fight, so Martin said.

CALVIN. [*gravely.*] That fellow Moyne. He's a tough specimen.

MRS. CALVIN. [*alert.*] Isn't he the man you put in the straight-jacket?

CALVIN. [*Nods. The flame begins to show in his eyes, which grow almost fanatic.*] Nothing—solitary confinement, the punishment cells, the straight-jacket—[MRS. CALVIN *winces.*] It's a severe measure, but it has no effect.

MRS. CALVIN. It *has* an effect, John. It makes him fight you harder than ever.

CALVIN. [*intensely.*] Of course we can starve him into temporary submission. We've done that. But then he will be up and making trouble again. [*He looks away from her, hating to confess it.*] He'd been drinking again today.

MRS. CALVIN. And you have no clue. . . .

CALVIN. No. [*at white heat.*] But if I catch the man who smuggles whiskey into this prison—it will not be an easy day for him!

MRS. CALVIN. Do you suspect anyone?

CALVIN. Of course there's a leak somewhere. But I haven't a trace. [*He brings his right hand down upon his left palm.*] I'll find it. The State's money shall be spent as the State intends. This prison shall be for the punishment

of criminals—not for the fattening of petty grafters!

MRS. CALVIN. It's so wrong!

CALVIN. [*pacing the room quickly, the fanatic light at full blaze.*] Wrong? Of course it's wrong. All State institutions suffer under the spoils system, but after all—how can we improve it? The chief bond between Party members is the possibility of mutual benefit. It's legitimate for the victorious party to put its members in office. The rub comes from the fact that so many politicians are unscrupulous blackguards. Now there's Casey. He contracts for the coal, but at a preposterous figure. I've half a dozen bids lower than his.

MRS. CALVIN. [*with rising inflection.*] He—?

CALVIN. As I said, he was a friend of the last Warden. They may have divided the rake-off, or it may have been [*with a grim smile*] friendship only. There won't be any rake-off this year if I know it. I'm saving the State about ten thousand dollars on food and coal alone. And I intend to stop the use of drugs by the men—it's almost stopped now, since I discharged those two keepers last week. . . . Moyne is a hard case. When I can find a way to break him, I shall make headway.

MRS. CALVIN. Not break!

CALVIN. Yes, just that.

MRS. CALVIN. [*in a low voice.*] You're wrong. I've been watching you, John, since we came here. I've not criticised your work once in this past six weeks. I wanted you to try your way. But you are putting your efforts on the wrong side. Whenever you punish Moyne you only make him more bitter—against you and all that you stand for. You say he is a strong man. [CALVIN *flashes a look at her.*] You're baffled by his persistence, and ability to get round you. Why don't you enlist his help?

CALVIN. Help?

MRS. CALVIN. [*with a fervor as keen as her husband's.*] All that power of resistance might be on *your* side—if you'd let it.

CALVIN. Why, Mary, the man's a convicted criminal!

MRS. CALVIN. [*pleadingly.*] What made him one? Do you know? Do you know the least thing about him as an individual? No, of course you don't. Why should he show you even human decency? You treat him like an animal—or worse. It's preposterous!

CALVIN. Does he deserve consideration at my hands?

MRS. CALVIN. Do you deserve it at his? Punishment is always a two-edged sword.

CALVIN. [*a just judge.*] The wages of sin is death.

[MRS. CALVIN *lifts a pale face and clutches the locket she wears in her hand.* CALVIN'S *face hardens.*

MRS. CALVIN. You taught me that two years ago. . . . I haven't forgotten Walter. Don't you remember that we used to argue in these very terms about the boy? "Let him learn that wrongdoing must be punished"—[*She catches her breath.*] How many times did you say that to me?

CALVIN. The boy was delicate—and a little weak; and he was—twelve years old. Oh, there is no parallel!

MRS. CALVIN. We crushed the fine things in our son by emphasizing the mistakes he made. [CALVIN *turns away as she rises.*] John, dear—I do not want to talk about Walter. If we were living it over, I'd so much rather that he should die—as he did, even, than grow into a hard, bitter man. But to stay here and see you fail again for the same reason—[*A wave of feeling chokes her.*]—I couldn't!

CALVIN. Mary . . .

MRS. CALVIN. When the Governor asked you to come here as Warden, it seemed to me a heaven-sent chance; a chance to prove that

Justice is not a blind force. I gave in to your arguments about our son, and you failed. Walter—preferred to die.

CALVIN. [*wincing.*] Mary!

MRS. CALVIN. Preferred to die rather than to face your heartless world ruled by—blind justice. [*She moves toward him.*] John, when I gathered Walter's stiff little body into my arms—that night—I thought I'd rather die than to go on in your cruel world. And then—all at once I knew that I must help you to see that you were wrong. [*Her voice trembles again.*] You must learn somehow to be human.

CALVIN. [*coldly; himself again.*] Perhaps it would be better, Mary, if you went away for a while. Your sympathies are too much tried here. You've never really recovered from the shock.

MRS. CALVIN. I never shall—in the way you mean, John. And I cannot leave you until I've made you see. . . .

[MARTIN *enters.*

MARTIN. I beg pardon, Madam. The Principal Keeper wishes to see the Warden.

CALVIN. Very well.

MRS. CALVIN. Have him here, John. Don't go back to that barren office. I'll rest before dinner.

CALVIN. I'm not driving you out?

[MRS. CALVIN *shakes her head. She nods to* MARTIN *who is watching her and goes toward the double doors.* CALVIN *follows her.* MARTIN *goes to office.*

CALVIN. [*solicitously.*] Try to rest, my dear.

MRS. CALVIN. I will. [*He starts to speak.*] No, let's not say any more. [*She smiles at him, and slips through the door.*]

[*As* CALVIN *turns back* MARTIN *opens the door into the offices and admits* KING. KING, *the Principal Keeper, is lanky, and of medium height, his chief characteristic being a pair of light gray eyes which are so steady in their gaze that one knows they have been trained in this art. But when no one is looking at him his glance is shifty. He has sandy hair, and wears the dark blue uniform of a keeper.*

[CALVIN *shakes off the unwilling emotion stirred by his wife.*

CALVIN. Well, Mr. King?

KING. The men in the cell-block who were fighting—they're locked in their own cell now. They must be sent to the cooler at once. I don't trust them in the same cell again.

CALVIN. You want an order?

KING. [*evidently thinking it unnecessary.*] You said no one was to be put in the dark cells without an order, sir.

CALVIN. Quite right. Moyne, and—?

KING. Wilson. He's pretty bad off, sir.

CALVIN. Hurt?

KING. [*shrugging.*] No—sick. Fever or something. He was to have gone to the hospital to-day.

CALVIN. [*sternly.*] He was not too sick to be drunk. He cannot escape punishment on that plea. He will go with Moyne—for one week.

KING. [*not making a point of it.*] Yes, sir.

CALVIN. They'll make out an order in my office. Then I'll sign it.

KING. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. Moyne been making any more disturbance?

[MARTIN *appears in the door.*

KING. [*after a perceptible pause.*] He's been quiet, sir. [*Exits through office.*]

CALVIN. [*to* MARTIN.] Well?

MARTIN. Mr. Casey to see you, sir.

CALVIN. I will see him here. I do not wish to be interrupted.

MARTIN. No, sir.

CALVIN. And ask Mr. Stevens for the coal-

contract file. I want the records for the last four years.

MARTIN. [*assents to the order.*] A woman has been asking to see you. She is outside in the waiting-room, sir, and—

CALVIN. Who is she?

MARTIN. I think she's the mother of one of the inmates, Warden.

CALVIN. Find out who she is, and her business with me. Remind me when Mr. Casey goes.

MARTIN. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. I won't see her unless it's something urgent.

MARTIN. No, sir.

[MARTIN *goes out into the office and* CALVIN *turns about the room.* MARTIN *returns, shows in* CASEY, *and leaves.*

[CASEY *is a short, dark Irishman of the Ulster type. He is well, but not too obviously well dressed.*

CASEY. [*speaking with wholly evident intent to be cordial.*] Well, Warden Calvin, this is a meeting I've been looking forward to. How are you?

CALVIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Casey. [*He motions toward a chair.*]

CASEY. [*shrewdly.*] Coal contracts ready?

CALVIN. [*noncommittally.*] I've sent for the papers.

CASEY. No hurry, no hurry—all the time in the world. . . . Been having a little rough-house here, eh?

[CALVIN *annoyed, starts to speak, and then pauses, frowning.*

CASEY. Somebody knocked out?

CALVIN. No.

CASEY. Nothing serious, I hope?

CALVIN. Mr. Casey, where do you get your information?

CASEY. [*rather uneasily.*] Oh, I stopped in the office as I came through.

CALVIN. The men there have been instructed not to talk to outsiders.

CASEY. *I'm* no outsider. They all know me here.

CALVIN. [*conceding this.*] Hereafter, however, come to me for whatever information you wish. I am the official mouthpiece of this prison.

CASEY. [*shrugging, and with a barely concealed grin.*] Have it your own way, Warden. You're doing fine here—I'll say that. Up to the Capitol last week I was talking to the Governor, and I told him then "Calvin is the boy to put the screws on," I says.

CALVIN. [*looks hard at* CASEY.] There will be some readjustments.

[MARTIN *brings in a file of papers and hands them to* CALVIN.

CALVIN. All right.

[MARTIN *goes out.*

CALVIN. Now, about the coal contract, Mr. Casey—

CASEY. Must get down to business sometime, eh? Sure enough, sure enough.

CALVIN. You have furnished the prison with coal for the last four years.

CASEY. That's right, Warden.

CALVIN. [*running through the papers.*] The figure is a constantly increasing one.

CASEY. [*jovially.*] Coal has been on the rise.

CALVIN. I may as well be frank, Mr. Casey. Your bid is not the lowest I have received.

CASEY. Don't doubt it.

CALVIN. Several men have offered to supply us with coal at a figure some thousands of dollars below yours.

CASEY. Usually do.

CALVIN. You understand that this contract goes to the lowest bidder?

CASEY. [*with utter good humor.*] Sure it does.

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CALVIN. [*firm and unsmiling.*] So that unless you can reduce your offer, the contract will be turned over to a new man.

CASEY. [*startled.*] What?

CALVIN. This contract goes to the lowest bidder.

CASEY. That contract goes to *me.* It's been going to me for four years.

CALVIN. It need not continue to do so.

CASEY. Oh, needn't it?

[CASEY, *after watching the Warden for a moment, finds the only solution which he can understand, for* CALVIN'S *attitude. He becomes insinuating.*

CASEY. Warden, you're a slicker one than I took you for.

CALVIN. What do you mean?

CASEY. [*dropping his voice confidingly.*] Just that. I didn't get your number. [CALVIN *stares at him.*] Go to it your own way, Warden. If you want a reputation as a financier—fix up your books to suit yourself. But when the check is made out—I want my figure.

CALVIN. [*blandly.*] That seems to you a good arrangement?

CASEY. Suits me, all right.

CALVIN. [*very quietly.*] You want, I understand, [*taps papers*] your original sum, [CASEY

nods] but I am to alter the figures in my books to suit my convenience?

CASEY. [*with a cheerful smile.*] That's the dope, Warden.

CALVIN. Why do you make such a suggestion to me?

CASEY. Why does a chicken—oh, come on, Warden, you know the answer.

CALVIN. And how am I to make up the deficit?

CASEY. Now, you Wardens ain't so dull. You've got your ways of picking up a bit on the side. And in the matter of your commission—set your figure.

CALVIN. [*reflectively.*] My figure.

CASEY. Go as far as you like—but have a heart!

CALVIN. [*playing him.*] What do you suggest?

[CASEY *rises and replies to* CALVIN *in an inaudible tone.*

CALVIN. Will you put that in writing?

CASEY. Nothing doing! D' you think I'm so fond of you I want to spend a year here? . . . You're trying to put something over on me, Warden Calvin.

CALVIN. [*finally.*] I should have to insist upon having it in writing.

CASEY. [*turning nasty.*] You mean I don't get my contract—unless—

CALVIN. [*forcefully.*] I mean you don't get the contract!

CASEY. Outbid on the rake-off, am I? Well—what's the least you'll take?

CALVIN. [*trying to suppress a seething rage.*] No one has offered me a premium for this contract, Mr. Casey, except yourself. I made up my mind to catch you in your dirty practices. . . .

CASEY. [*snarling.*] You did, did you?

CALVIN. I knew I'd prove you a scoundrel.

CASEY. [*quickly.*] That's hard to prove.

CALVIN. I've done it.

CASEY. [*quietly.*] Got proofs? You've got a pile of papers there. They're valuable, aren't they? Bring 'em into Court. The laugh won't be on me. Do you think I was born last year? Warden Calvin—take a straight tip. You'll get nothing by bothering me. Cut it out if you know what's good for you. [*Smiles suddenly.*] And say, Calvin—while you're about it—you'd better learn the difference between testimony and evidence!

CALVIN. [*baffled, but fighting.*] I know what is good for the prison; and there is nothing that

I need learn from you, Mr. Casey. [*Goes to bell and rings.*]

CASEY. [*menacingly.*] You may take a few lessons yet—if you're going to hold your job.

CALVIN. Thank you. My remaining here lies with my superiors. [*ironically.*] Why not offer them your advice?

CASEY. [*calculatingly.*] Not a bad idea, Calvin; not a bad idea.

[KING *appears in the doorway.* CALVIN *and* CASEY *turn to him, but there is no sign of recognition between* CASEY *and* KING.

KING. [*to* CALVIN, *and holding out paper.*] The order, sir.

CALVIN. [*replies absently.*] Thank you. [*to* CASEY.] Then we may consider our interview at an end. Good evening. I shall not see you again, I presume.

CASEY. [*warningly.*] Don't presume too far, Warden; don't presume too far.

[CALVIN *turns to* KING *with an air of dismissing* CASEY *who fumes up and down.* KING, *unseen by* CALVIN, *exchanges a glance with* CASEY.

CALVIN. I'll have to get my pen before I can sign these, King—it's in my other coat.

[MARTIN *appears in the door.*

CALVIN. [*to* MARTIN.] The motor. Mr. Casey is catching the seven o'clock train. He will leave at once.

MARTIN. Yes, sir. [*Exits.*]

CALVIN. [*with double meaning.*] In two minutes the motor will be at the door, Mr. Casey. Wait, please, King. [*He goes out into his inner rooms.*]

[CASEY *glares after him.* KING *moves his shifty eyes for a long look at* CASEY.

CASEY. By God, I'll call your bluff—or get your goat! Damn fool! Think this prison is run by the Warden, do you? You're in the kindergarten class with a lot to learn!

KING. [*in a low voice.*] What's the Chief thinking of?

CASEY. [*pacing the floor.*] The Governor did it. The Governor thinks a lot about reform. The Governor's got to reform a whole lot of things he don't expect to. When I get to the Capitol I bet *someone* will take steps to make the Governor see reason. If we don't do it one way—well, you've heard about skinning cats, eh?

KING. This place is a morgue!

CASEY. [*good humored again.*] Moyne got the stuff, did he?

KING. [*furtively, nods.*] He and Wilson were howling drunk. They got to beating each other up and—

CASEY. [*sneeringly.*] Y' know I just love *sincere* reform. . . . Wilson didn't know where the stuff came from?

KING. [*shakes head.*] I took care of that. The keeper just handed it to them.

CASEY. It's all pure friendship stuff with Dan Moyne. His family gets five dollars a week, you know, while he's in stir.

[KING *gives* CASEY *one of his rare direct glances.*

CASEY. Pure brotherly love, King. [*Grins.*] Dan feels a natural gratitude. That's the kind Dan is.

KING. He's looking for a pardon soon.

CASEY. It was talked of. He won't get it. Maybe—there's a reason. Dan might be more useful here than outside. [*blandly.*] Fond of Warden Calvin of course.

KING. [*dryly.*] Warden's had him in the solitary, and the straight-jacket. He's going to the cooler for to-day's business.

CASEY. [*reflectively.*] The jail.

KING. Allowance per day—water, one gill; bread, one piece, and not too big a one at that. And he's booked for a week of it. Darkness,

and lice, a plenty. You know what the cooler is like.

CASEY. [*thinking fast.*] No. But it's time I found out. I might do some reforming myself. . . . Could I see Dan Moyne in the cooler without its being known?

KING. Nobody gets by the Visitors' Book. . . .

CASEY. Well, once inside the prison—?

KING. I'll get you into the jail myself. Set your time—better make it early.

CASEY. This Saturday. I'll come up by the first train.

KING. 'Bout six in the morning.

CASEY. You just keep things moving here. And say—don't Calvin send you signed slips from time to time?

KING. Orders? Sure.

CASEY. Hand me a batch.

KING. Can't be done. He's started a new system of book-keeping, and he keeps copies of everything. *And* he keeps the copies locked in the files. Says he's going to stop the leaks.

CASEY. Wise old bird, ain't he? Never mind. You get some of them. Take an impression of the key. Slide me out one or two.

KING. I can't, I tell you. He—

CASEY. Shut up! He'll be back. Don't argue; do as you're told.

KING. [*sulkily.*] He's had an eye on everyone. I want to keep my job. You know two of the boys were canned last week.

CASEY. Your job would look sick without the rake-off I give you! Honest, you'd be up against it if I got a new man to do the work for—[*with a gesture*] them up there; now, wouldn't you?

KING. I know a lot about you, Mr. Casey.

CASEY. I know more about you, King—and what I know, I can prove! Don't be a fool. Get me those papers, no matter how. I'll need 'em—down in the city.

KING. They're no good. Just ordinary daily orders to send men to the hospital or the jail, and like that. He [*motioning toward office*] don't do anything incriminating.

CASEY. He might. Especially after I've had his orders a while. Get me pencil copies if you can. . . . Now keep the cons stirred up, King. Pull some of that stuff we worked on old Warden Perkins. Make the whole crowd think Calvin's out for their blood. And don't forget to remind 'em who their friends are.

KING. They get awful restless without booze or dope after they're used to it. And they ain't the only ones that lose. The month before

Calvin came we pulled down 300 plunks on what we brought in. Do you know what we've taken in this month? Twenty-five dollars!

CASEY. Don't worry. You'll be rid of him soon. He ain't got a chance, King, not a chance—*as long as we can hold on to the men.*

KING. [*looking keenly at him.*] Don't over half the cons depend on us for the whiskey and drugs they use? Ain't they got to have it? *He's* trying to cut out their getting any more. They'll stay with us—don't you forget it, Mr. Casey.

CASEY. Well, they should worry. They get theirs; we get ours—and the dear public's perfectly satisfied. . . . You know where to reach me, don't you?

KING. Headquarters?

CASEY. Right. I'll be down on Saturday. You have some papers for me then, or tell me how to get them. So long.

KING. So long.

[MARTIN *enters with a note in his hand.*

MARTIN. [*surprised at seeing* CASEY.] The motor is waiting, sir. [*to* KING.] Did the Warden go out, Mr. King?

KING. [*motioning.*] Upstairs.

CASEY. [*to* MARTIN, *affably.*] Don't remember old friends, do you, Martin?

MARTIN. [*looking at him; quietly.*] Yes, sir; and my enemies too, sir.

CASEY. [*glaring.*] You milk fed crook! [*Goes out through office.*]

[KING *who has watched this silently, crosses to the chaise longue and seats himself.* MARTIN *starts upstairs, but meets* MRS. CALVIN *coming down.*

MRS. CALVIN. What is it, Martin?

MARTIN. A note for the Warden.

MRS. CALVIN. I detained him. He will be down directly.

[MRS. CALVIN *crosses to the chaise longue and sees* KING *who rises uneasily.*

KING. The Warden asked me to wait.

MRS. CALVIN. Certainly.

[CALVIN *comes in and* MARTIN *meets him with the note.*

CALVIN. One thing at a time, Martin.

[CALVIN *has in his hand the orders which* KING *brought him, and his fountain pen.*

CALVIN. Everything is right, I think, King. Look them over if you will, please. [KING *does so;* CALVIN *retains copies.*] I'll file these carbons. Good-night.

KING. Good-night, sir. . . . Don't you want me to file those for you?

CALVIN. No, thank you. I'll do it.

[KING *goes.* CALVIN *puts the carbons in his pocket and turns to* MARTIN. MRS. CALVIN *has taken up some sewing.* CALVIN *inquires* MARTIN'S *errand with a glance.*

MARTIN. [*handing* CALVIN *the note.*] It's the woman, sir, who has been waiting for you. She is the mother of Daniel Moyne.

[CALVIN *makes a movement of impatience. He does not open the note.*

MARTIN. She was to visit him to-day.

CALVIN. I've nothing to do with that.

MARTIN. No, sir. . . . Moyne is going to the cooler so he could not see his mother.

CALVIN. Naturally not.

MARTIN. Well, sir, she came four hours on the train. She ain't seen him for eight months. She's a poor woman, sir, and can't afford the journey oftener than that.

CALVIN. That's unfortunate, but men in punishment cannot have visitors.

MARTIN. No, sir.

CALVIN. The Principal Keeper knows that.

MARTIN. Yes, sir, but Mr. King told me to see you. Moyne ain't in the cooler yet and . . .

CALVIN. He's been chalked in his own cell

before being removed to the punishment cells. I have just signed the order to send him down.

MARTIN. [*changing his tactics and motioning toward the note which* CALVIN *holds still unopened.*] The woman, sir, wrote you a note.

CALVIN. [*his temper flashing.*] Of course she cannot see him!

MRS. CALVIN. [*speaking impulsively, but gently.*] But, John, you will read her note.

[CALVIN *shrugs, opens the note, reads it with a frown.* MRS. CALVIN *crosses to him, and he hands her the note with a sigh.*

CALVIN. It's all very irregular. The usual melodrama, Mary.

[MRS. CALVIN *reads the note with a look of surprise and pleasure at being permitted to do so.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*quietly.*] It seems pathetic to me.

CALVIN. It's out of the question!

MRS. CALVIN. Then explain to her, John, just why she cannot see him. She won't understand unless you do, and not to know will distress her even more than the truth. Please.

CALVIN. It's nonsense! I cannot and will not do it! [*Of a sudden he checks himself, and in a*

flash changes.] . . . But—you may be right, Mary!

[CALVIN *nods a quick assent to* MARTIN. MRS. CALVIN *smiles, recognizing a familiar characteristic, motions* MARTIN *to wait, and crosses over to her husband.*

MRS. CALVIN. John—to please me again—have her come in here. It's so much more human than your barn-like office.

CALVIN. [*exasperated.*] Well—! It's your affair then. [*Nods to* MARTIN.] No heroics, Mary.

[MRS. CALVIN *shakes her head smiling.* [MARTIN *brings in the old woman. She is pale and thin, bent and wrinkled, with a dress of rusty black. She is completely awed by the interview.*

CALVIN. You are Daniel Moyne's mother?

MRS. MOYNE. Yes, your honor.

CALVIN. Unfortunately, Mrs. Moyne, your son has been sent to the punishment cells for drunkenness.

MRS. MOYNE. Dan ain't a bad boy, your honor, he ain't a bad boy. To be sure he'd be after having a drop taken, and he stopping in at the saloon at evening. But he ain't like some are, sir, spending all his wages for the drink—

CALVIN. At present, however, he is confined for drunkenness, a fact that will prevent his seeing you. My wife persuaded me to explain to you that this is a rule of the prison and that therefore no exception can be made in your favor. I am sorry.

MRS. MOYNE. [*turning to* MRS. CALVIN.] Do you know what it is to have a boy, ma'am? May he never be taken away, and he the sole support of his old mother and three childer.

[*There is a momentary pause and* CALVIN *looks at his wife expressively.*

CALVIN. [*to* MRS. CALVIN.] You see, Mary?

MRS. CALVIN. [*to* MRS. MOYNE.] It is very hard for you.

MRS. MOYNE. Indeed, indeed, ma'am, $15.00 a week regular we lost when he was sent away.

MRS. CALVIN. And you have been saving to come here and see him?

MRS. MOYNE. Sure, it's eight months since last I saw Dan, ma'am. Little Jimmy—that's the baby—has a new tooth, ma'am.

CALVIN. Really, Mary—!

[MRS. CALVIN *shakes her head at him, smiling a little.*

MRS. MOYNE. [*to* CALVIN.] And, your honor, some of Dan's friends has been trying their

influence with the Governor, God save him, to get Dan a pardon.

CALVIN. Ah!

MRS. MOYNE. Yesterday was the day we heard he could not get it, sir. [*to* MRS. CALVIN.] Oh, I'm almost frightened to tell him, ma'am; he was that eager for his pardon, and him hoping and waiting. . . .

MRS. CALVIN. Oh, I'm so sorry!

MRS. MOYNE. It's hard surely. [*She begins to cry with the monotonous weeping of old age.*] I wanted to see Dan to tell him that the childer was still alive, and to say to him—May God Almighty and the Blessed Saints protect you until such time as you're released from bondage. [*Cries gently.*]

[MRS. CALVIN *turns to her husband who has been watching* MRS. MOYNE *keenly. He has been thinking hard, his face lit by a new idea.*

CALVIN. [*to* MRS. MOYNE.] You say Moyne's pardon was refused, and that he doesn't know it yet?

[MRS. MOYNE *nods half fearfully.*

CALVIN. [*briskly.*] You shall see your son at once, and here. [*Rings bell. To* MRS. CALVIN.] A week in the dark cells with that to think about ought to reduce him to order.

MRS. CALVIN. Oh, John!

MRS. MOYNE. [*in terror.*] What are they going to do to Dan, ma'am?

[MARTIN *appears in the doorway.*

CALVIN. Martin, ask the P. K. to send Moyne here before he goes to the dark cells. I want to see him.

MARTIN. Yes, sir. [*Goes out.*]

MRS. MOYNE. Is he coming here now? To this room is it? Oh ma'am—it's a little thing—might I kiss my boy? I ain't even touched his hand since he came to this place.

[MRS. CALVIN *is too moved to speak.* CALVIN *is as cold and as hard as steel.*

CALVIN. Your son will come here, but you must not touch him. I want you to tell him that his pardon has been refused. [MRS. CALVIN *starts to speak.* CALVIN *to her.*] Stringent measures are necessary. I've told you, Moyne must be broken. [*To* MRS. MOYNE.] I'm doing this for your son's own good.

MRS. MOYNE. May God bless your honor, and the Blessed Saints—

CALVIN. And then he will go at once to the punishment cells. You will be allowed to see him for a few moments only. I shall remain in the room. Mary, you had better go.

MRS. CALVIN. I will stay.

MRS. MOYNE. [*weeping.*] It is a pleasant thing to see your only son after eight months, ma'am, but it's very sorrowful to have nothing but disappointment to bring him; misery and disappointment to your only son, and he so hoping. . . .

MRS. CALVIN. [*crosses to her and speaks gently.*] You have forgotten that the children are well, and that the baby has a tooth.

MRS. MOYNE. Oh, ma'am—yes, ma'am.

[MARTIN *comes to the door.*

MARTIN. Shall Moyne—?

CALVIN. Bring him in.

[MARTIN *steps out and admits* KING *who leads in* DANIEL MOYNE. DAN *is haggard and surly. At first he does not look up. His mother stops her crying and looks at him. There is a long moment of silence.* MRS. CALVIN *does not take her eyes from the old woman.* CALVIN *is simply stern and cold—a just judge.*

MRS. MOYNE. Dannie!

[DAN *starts violently and sees his mother. For a moment the face, which was once sensitive, lights up with pleasure. Then his eyes travel to* MRS. CALVIN *and to the Warden, and his face sets again. He*

glares at them all like some trapped animal, saying nothing. KING *reaches back and raps on the door.*

MRS. MOYNE. Dannie boy, it's mother!

[*Keeper* SCOTT *enters and takes up his position on the other side of* DAN.

CALVIN. He knows you, Mrs. Moyne. [*At his brisk tone the old woman shrinks, and* DAN *looks furiously at the Warden.*] Moyne, you took a bad time to disgrace yourself. This was the day for your mother's visit. Men in Punishment don't see visitors. [DAN *makes an inarticulate sound.*] I have, however, broken a rule because I think it well for you to hear the news which your mother. . . .

DAN. [*trying to leap forward.*] Did they get it?

[*There is a moment's pause.* MRS. MOYNE *moves forward a step. On her face is written her disappointment. She sobs, but says nothing.* MRS. CALVIN *watches* DAN. *She is pale with sympathy.* CALVIN *is quite unmoved.*

DAN. [*with a broken cry.*] Oh, the stinking cowards!

MRS. MOYNE. They tried, sonny, they tried, but the Governor. . . .

DAN. Damn the Governor!

CALVIN. Moyne!

DAN. You too! What do you and the Governor know about it—hey?

CALVIN. Take him away.

[MRS. CALVIN *moves swiftly to her husband.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*in a quick, decided tone.*] Wait, John. You said this was to be my affair. Let me manage it.

[*The shock stops everyone.* CALVIN *lifts his shoulders half unwillingly.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*briskly to* DAN.] Your mother has made this long journey to see you. Don't waste time in raging. [DAN *stares at her blankly.*] Of course you're disappointed about your pardon, but cursing won't do any good. [*She moves over to* MRS. MOYNE.] Your mother has other news, news of home and your children. You must not let her go away again without hearing it.

[DAN *looks at* MRS. CALVIN *as if she were some new and strange creature.* CALVIN *moves forward and then checks himself.*

DAN. [*hoarsely to his mother.*] Kids well?

MRS. MOYNE. Yes, Dannie, they're well. Only the baby was a bit ailing on account of his teeth, but the tooth came through, and they're

all well. They sent their love and a kiss to their dad. . . . The baby's tooth is like that, Dannie, you would like to feel it biting on your finger like a grown man.

[CALVIN *moves toward his wife impatiently. She checks him. He goes to the other end of the room and starts walking up and down with increasing restlessness, glancing at his watch, which he holds open in his hand, from time to time.*

DAN. [*to his mother.*] Do they get enough to eat?

MRS. MOYNE. They have enough now, since the boys sent us—

DAN. [*sharply.*] Never mind about that!

MRS. MOYNE. But Maizy, she is needing shoes for the school. [*To* MRS. CALVIN.] A great child for shoes, she is, ma'am, Maizy.

[MRS. CALVIN *is listening calmly, but intently.* DAN *looks at her again in wonderment.*

MRS. CALVIN. How old is Maizy?

MRS. MOYNE. Maizy, now. . . .

DAN. [*to* MRS. CALVIN.] She's ten.

MRS. CALVIN. She must wear a twelve or a twelve and a half shoe.

MRS. MOYNE. [*pleased.*] Twelve D.

DAN. [*suspiciously.*] She don't need charity.

[MRS. CALVIN *is rather taken aback and says nothing. Before she can pick up the broken thread the next scene is in full swing and has checked her.*

MRS. MOYNE. [*to* DAN *reprovingly.*] Dannie—she has a kind heart. [*To* MRS. CALVIN.] I says to Maizy, ma'am, now when your dad has his pardon got—

DAN. [*breaks in with passionate fury.*] Pardon! Pipe-dream! You're fools, the lot of you! And that damn dude Governor's the worst of the bunch!

[CALVIN *stops short in his quick march, and snaps his watch in a decisive way.*

CALVIN. Take him away!

[DAN *is hauled from the room by* KING *who threatens him with his club.*

KING. Come on now!

[KING *is aided by* SCOTT *in dragging* DAN *out.*

DAN. [*snarling as he is jerked out.*] Yes, and you, Mr. Warden, with your rules and your punishment. Go on and find out! Put me in the jail. String me up by my wrists again! You can't break me! I'll beat you to it yet! I'll get you good! I'll get you. . . . [*Exit.*]

[*At a motion from* CALVIN, *who has been utterly unmoved by* DAN'S *outburst,*

the old woman is led weeping from the room by SCOTT, *who returned for her after helping to eject* DAN.

[MRS. CALVIN *is startled, half frightened. She goes quickly to her husband.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*anxiously.*] Dearest!

CALVIN. [*coldly, but putting an arm about her shoulders.*] No, Mary. I am in no danger. The man is powerless against me.

[*Immediately following his words the lights go out in the cell-block, and some distant door slams to with a heavy metallic clang.*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

THE punishment cells, otherwise known as the dark cells, the jail, or the cooler, are five in number, each measuring 7ft. x 7ft. x 3¼ ft. and are made of steel. They are situated in a vaulted stone chamber below the surface of the ground. On entering this chamber, the visitor finds himself in a small square ante-room, with a narrow corridor into which the doors of the individual cells open, directly in front of him. As his eyes become accustomed to the light which filters dimly through two narrow slits high in the gray wall, he will see on his left a bench, with a sink just behind it, and in front of him at the end of the first steel cell, a locker in which the "jail clothes" are kept. When a keeper enters the room, he lights it by means of a single electric light on a long leader. This light may be carried into the cells, which are themselves unlighted. They are bare of furniture; in the door of each is a grated opening a foot square.

The doors of cells 1, 3, and 5 are open, the cells being empty. In cell 2 is JACK WILSON, *and in cell 4 near the entrance to the room is* DANIEL MOYNE.

When the curtain rises there is silence in the cells. Then JACK *coughs and coughs in a long spasm. The door of the room rattles and a key grates in the lock. The door opens and admits keepers* SCOTT *and* FRANCIS *with* JOSEPH RUFFIO, *a prisoner.* FRANCIS *closes the door again.*

JOE. I tell you I never. . . .

SCOTT. Shut up!

JOE. But, Cap'n, I was looking. . . .

SCOTT. Take off your clothes.

[FRANCIS *opens the locker and takes out the suit of jail clothes which* RUFFIO *is to wear. Both men in the cells listen intently, crouched close to their doors.*

JOE. Well—I guess I got no kick coming. I'm lucky not to get rail-roaded to the Chair. There's no comeback anyhow. But I never had a knife. That runner's got it in for me. He framed me up.

[JOE *stands in his underclothes with his hands held above his head.* SCOTT *searches him by passing his hands rapidly over his body and limbs.*

SCOTT. All right. Put on those duds. [*He points to the clothes* FRANCIS *holds.*]

JOE. [*hesitating.*] Cap'n, who wore those last?

SCOTT. Don't make so much talk. Put 'em on.

[*They complete the process.* FRANCIS *opens the door of cell 1 and* JOE *is thrust into it.* FRANCIS *goes to a row of small red buckets, standing against the back wall of the outer room, takes one and carries it into* JOE'S *cell, where he leaves it. Then he goes out of the cell closing the door behind him. He locks the cell-door. The key turns gratingly. Meanwhile* SCOTT *has been cutting off the white disk and good conduct stripes from the sleeve of the coat* RUFFIO *wore when he came in. After he has done this* SCOTT *puts the clothes in the locker.*

[*The two keepers put out the light and leave the room. The door slams and the key grates heavily.*

JOE. Hello, pals! Who's among those present?

JACK. I'm Jack Wilson—in number two.

JOE. Sure. And Dan Moyne's here too, ain't he? Anybody else?

JACK. Dan's here, in number four, but he ain't talking much. No one else. Who are you?

JOE. Joe Ruffio. Weave shop. Cap't Smith's all right, but that damned little runner

of his is a rat. He framed me up. Planted a knife in my locker. Just wait. He'll get his all right.

[JACK *coughs violently.*

JOE. Ain't got the T.Bs., have you, kid?

JACK. Wish I had. I'm sick. Sore in my ear. It runs.

JOE. Cheer up, old-timer! What do you do down here to make things lively? Ever sing? [*He hums a little.*] Know this? [*He sings a few bars of an Italian street song.*]

[JACK *has another spasm of coughing which leaves him so weak and ill that the coughs finally change to sobs.*

JOE. Come on, kid. Cheer up.

JACK. Oh yes, you can talk.

JOE. [*with firm quietness.*] Why can I talk better than anyone else?

JACK. You ain't been down here four days. [*He groans.*]

JOE. [*rather tenderly.*] I know it.

JACK. Oh, my head!

JOE. Pretty bad, is it?

JACK. Feels like a house on fire. [*He whimpers a little like a child.*] I want a handkerchief. I wish I had a handkerchief.

JOE. [*a little bitterly.*] That wouldn't be safe. You might. . . . [*He pauses significantly.*]

DAN. [*suddenly.*] Huh! He could use his shirt. What good to take away his handkerchief? Tie the sleeves of his shirt round his neck—that's the way.

JOE. [*calmly.*] Well, the chap that did it last, down here, used his handkerchief, Dan. They never let you keep your handkerchief since that.

DAN. [*growling.*] All the comforts of home here, ain't there? God, Jack, that pen of ours in the cell-block looks like a modern improvement flat when I think about it.

JACK. [*whimpering.*] I'm sore all over from the rivets on the floor. I wish I had a bed. It's cold on the floor. I'm cold all over except my head. My head's burning up—burning up.

DAN. Cut it, can't you, Jack? It was my fault, but you know how full of booze I was. [*A pause. His voice comes, full of pleading and affection.*] Don't you, Jack?

JACK. Sure I do, Dan.

JOE. [*easily.*] Well, when two fellows are locked in one cell from noon Saturday till Tuesday morning, no wonder they get restless.

DAN. I never hit a pal, when I ain't been drinking.

JOE. You can't never tell what you will do, cooped up that way, with the best pal in the world.

DAN. [*rather pathetically.*] I never hit you before, did I, Jack?

JACK. No, Dan. Ever since I come here you've been white to me. [*Stubbornly.*] But I was right if I was sick.

DAN. Aw, your mind's queer.

JACK. It ain't. The guard was talking to the P. K., I tell you. [*He draws a long groaning breath.*]

JOE. [*soothingly.*] What did he say, old man?

JACK. Tell him, Dan. I can't talk much.

DAN. Jack thought the P. K. was talking about Casey. You know who Casey is, don't you?

JOE. For one thing—he's your ward-boss, ain't he?

DAN. Yes, sort of. Jack—sick the way he is—took it into his head that Casey sent us the booze the keeper slipped us. Well, what if he did? Was it poisoned?

JACK. [*with sick petulance.*] There was something phony about it. The P. K. said, Casey's orders. I know he did. What did he mean—orders?

DAN. It don't cut no ice if he did. A man might send a present to a pal—treat him to a drink.

JOE. He might—if he was a pal. Jack's got

the right dope, Dan. Politicians don't give presents for nothing. Casey is a politician.

DAN. [*with rising anger.*] You're crazy, both of you. What do you know about Casey? Why you never saw him in your life!

JACK. That's so, Dan, but. . . .

DAN. Mr. Casey has been good to me.

JOE. He wants something, you bet.

DAN. [*with a short laugh.*] From me? Now what? Casey's a big man. He don't need to bother with me, but he likes to be friendly. Look at the boys that tried to get me my pardon—hell burn the Governor!

JOE. Dan, the Party don't do nothing for love. The Party is out for cash only.

DAN. Then why does it send my mother five plunks a week? She can't do nothing for them.

JOE. Ain't she taking care of your kids?

DAN. Sure!

JOE. The Party knows a man feels grateful to anybody who'd look out for his kids while he's doing his bit. And when you got a man grateful—you got him tied hand and foot. Let politics alone, Dan. You'll never get anywhere except where you are, sticking to them.

DAN. Sticking to 'em is the only way you *can*

get anywhere! How else can you get your term cut? Who else'd get a pardon for you?

JOE. Pardon? That don't always work, does it, Dan?

DAN. Oh, damn that Governor!

JOE. Cut loose, Dan. Shake Casey's crowd. They may help you now, but when they do get you out, they'll put you on some dirty job, and—you'll come back. You'll go down and out.

DAN. Might as well as rot in this hole. God—it was bad enough with the old Warden, but what it'll be now the reformers are having fun with us, the devil alone knows.

JACK. Mr. Calvin is. . . .

DAN. [*mockingly.*] Mr. Calvin is the only Warden you ever saw, Jack. Well, he won't break me. I'll see him frying in hell first!

JOE. The Warden is stiff. He's got the wrong hunch.

DAN. Let him be. Stiffer the better. He won't last so long.

JOE. No. A stiff Warden don't have much chance, even if he is honest.

[JACK *moans as if in protest at this sentiment.*

JOE. Nobody wants a stiff Warden. Do you

want to live in hell, Jack? [*Jack groans weakly.*] And—[*He stumbles over the thought.*] and people outside won't stand for this reform stuff.

JACK. What people?

JOE. You got me there, Jack. Politicians, I guess.

DAN. Lay everything on to politics, Joe!

JOE. Well, you remember Warden Perkins? He got run out fast enough.

DAN. Served him right.

JACK. [*thickly.*] Talk louder, Joe. My head buzzes. I can't hear you.

JOE. Somebody kept sending the men booze, and dope, and then there was riots. Place was so upset they thought they'd have the militia down. The Governor thought it was Warden Perkins' fault—so did the fathead public—but it was all a plant, stirred up from outside.

DAN. Good stuff!

JOE. You're all for the Party now, Dan, but the Party ain't for you, and don't you forget it. The Party's out for money. They have dirty work to do—and you're a crook, fit to do it. They might get you off this time, but they wouldn't let you make good anywhere. Once a crook, always a crook, is their motto. If they have a line on you, then you can't go straight. Sooner or later you'll be back here.

DAN. I may always be a crook, but I'm damned if I ever get caught again. I'll show 'em, the rotten. . . .

[*There is the sound of the key in the door.* SCOTT *enters, bringing bread and water. He takes the light on its long leader into the passage with him and throws it through the grating into each cell. He looks into the empty cells which stand always with their doors open. The keeper does not open the cell doors. He pokes the piece of bread through the slot in the door and then pours the water into the cup the man holds out through a funnel with a very long spout which reaches through the grating. He goes first to* DAN *and gives him his allowance.* DAN *sees him through the cell grating by the aid of the light.*

DAN. [*with a start of surprise.*] Hello, Scotty! What the. . . .

SCOTT. Can't talk now. Back later.

[SCOTT *goes on to* JACK'S *cell. He flashes the light into the cell.* JACK *is stretched on his back in a half stupor. He does not move.*

SCOTT. Hey! What's the matter with you?

[*The light is held steadily for a moment*

straight in JACK'S *eyes. He moves uneasily. The others are listening.*

JOE. He's sick, sir.

SCOTT. [*without emotion.*] Sick?

[*The light continues to focus on* JACK'S *face. He slowly rolls over, sees the keeper, and struggles to his feet.*

JACK. [*gasping.*] Water? [*He pours the few drops that remain in his cup down his throat, and greedily extends his cup for another gill. The keeper fills the cup, and thrusts in the bread.*] Say, my throat's burning up—look—it only covers the bottom of the cup. Couldn't you fill it full? Just this once!

SCOTT. Against the rules.

JACK. For God's sake, sir. [*He cries.*] I'm sick, sir. Water would save my life. Couldn't I have the cup full just this time? So I could drink a whole mouthful at once. For God's sake, sir!

SCOTT. [*in a slightly lowered tone.*] What do I get out of it?

JACK. [*faltering.*] I—I haven't. . . .

SCOTT. I'm no charity organization.

JACK. [*in despair.*] For the love of God, sir!

[SCOTT *goes on to* JOE, *gives him his allowance, turns out the light, and leaves the room.* JACK *settles back.*

JOE. You didn't get it, Jack?

JACK. I ought to have known better than to ask.

JOE. Tough luck. Wish I could slip you mine. I don't need it so much. I've been having all I wanted.

JACK. You're all to the good, Joe. You'll need it before you get out anyhow. Oh, my head!

JOE. Better sleep.

JACK. Seems as if I'd smother when I lie down. I might sit in the corner and sleep if it weren't for the bed-bugs.

JOE. Ain't they hell?

JACK. I'm so damn thirsty I could drink the whole river. Last night I didn't sleep at all. First my head—then the rivets on the floor—then the bed-bugs—and no water. And in the morning that dynamo next door, beat and beat. . . . Did you hear me choking, Dan?

DAN. I talked to you.

JACK. Oh, sure. Well, I got to thinking about the death-house next door. Wondered how the fellows in there feel when they hear the dynamo buzzing.

JOE. Poor devils! They're worse off than we are.

JACK. Anyhow they know they'll be out of it soon.

DAN. Say! Cheerful party, ain't we? For the love of Mike, buck up. Can't you think of anything better than the death-house to gas about?

JOE. Eaten your supper, Dan?

DAN. Supper—huh! I chewed the stale stuff they call bread.

JOE. Mine's mouldy, too.

DAN. This here chunk's been mouldy for three days. I can think of a supper now. A steak, smothered in onions, with fried potatoes and vegetables. . . .

JACK. For God's sake, Dan!

DAN. Go to your downy, Jack. Sweet dreams!

JOE. Take a drink, Jack, and get to sleep, old man.

JACK. Don't dare. A fellow might choke to death down here without getting help. I wake up when the midnight train whistles, and I'll never get off again without a bit of water.

JOE. Save it then.

JACK. I put it away in a safe corner till my throat gets cracking.

JOE. Say, how do you lie down here?

DAN. Take off your shoes and shirt and make yourself a pillow. Throw your coat over you. It's warmer so.

[JOE *follows these directions, and the others do the same.*

JOE. Good night, fellows.

DAN. 'Night.

JACK. Good night, Joe.

[*There is a momentary stirring as they settle for the night.*

[*The curtain falls for a moment to indicate the passing of hours.*

[*The whistle of a train is heard faintly.*

[*The curtain rises. The stage is in black darkness. There is the rattle of keys and the clang of drawn bolts. The iron hinges of the door creak. The men are still asleep.* SCOTT *enters and turns on the light. He takes it to* DAN'S *cell and flashes it in.*

SCOTT. [*briskly.*] Cell four!

DAN. Huh?

SCOTT. Cell four!

DAN. [*half awake.*] What's yours?

SCOTT. [*roughly.*] For Christ's sake answer your name, so I'll know you ain't dead!

DAN. [*snapping.*] Daniel Moyne.

SCOTT. [*cheerfully.*] Hello, Dan.

DAN. [*sitting bolt upright in the light; he cannot see the speaker because of the glare.*] Who is it?

SCOTT. Scott.

[*They talk in lowered tones.* DAN *rises and leans against the cell door.*

DAN. Said you'd be back, didn't you? What are you doing down here? This ain't your regular.

SCOTT. P. K.'s orders. For to-night only.

DAN. Say, the stuff you gave us sure got us in wrong.

SCOTT. Stuff was all right. [*He grins in.*]

DAN. [*grins.*] Sure.

SCOTT. On my way.

DAN. [*settling back.*] Bad luck to you!

[SCOTT *goes to* JACK'S *cell.* JACK *is huddled in a corner. When the light is flashed on him he does not move. The keeper turns the light into every corner of the cell. In the corner nearest* JACK'S *feet he pauses for a moment to rest the light on the tin cup of water.*

SCOTT. Cell two!

[JACK *does not move.*

SCOTT. Hey, you, two. [*He holds the light in* JACK'S *eyes.* JACK *jumps awake.*] Two!

JACK. Yes, sir?

SCOTT. Answer your name.

JACK. Wilson.

SCOTT. John Wilson?

JACK. Number 25,683.

SCOTT. Right.

[*He goes on to* JOE, *and* JACK *tries to find his former position.*

SCOTT. [*coming to* JOE *who has been waked.*] Cell one!

JOE. Joseph Ruffio. Is it morning?

SCOTT. Midnight round.

[JOE *mutters half to himself.*

SCOTT. What's eating you?

JOE. Can't sleep. First night here.

SCOTT. [*friendly.*] You'll get used to it.

[SCOTT *leaves the room, putting out the light, and locking the door behind him. The stage is again in utter darkness.*

JOE. How's the head, Jack?

JACK. [*crying out miserably.*] Why can't they let us alone at night?

JOE. Precaution against accident. Get back to sleep, kid.

[*There is a moment's silence. Suddenly, tearing the heaviness of the darkness, comes a wailing scream, hopeless, bitter, as of a child who is tortured unspeakably. Both* DAN *and* JOE *leap to their feet, speaking together.*

JOE. Who's hurt?

DAN. For God's sake—

JACK. I've spilled my water! My water is spilled!

DAN. [*with infinite relief, his voice broken from*

nervous strain.] Damn you—thought you were killed!

JACK. [*wailing.*] Might as well be! Might as well murder me in cold blood. I'll die without water. I'm sick . . . sick. I need water!

JOE. [*gently.*] How did you do it, old man?

JACK. I got turned round. Hit it with my foot and tipped it over. Thought it was at my head, and reached for it. And then I hit the cup with my foot. [*His voice rises uncertainly.*] It's all spilled . . . it's all spilled! [*The tin cup rattles on the iron floor.*] My cup of water . . . I want water . . . I want water now!

JOE. Wish I could get you mine.

DAN. [*snapping.*] Well, you can't!

JACK. [*quickly; feverishly.*] I've got to have water. I can feel it on the floor. [*His voice flames up again in delirium.*] I'll take my shirt and throw it over his head! . . . There's water out there. . . . I can see it . . . a whole pond . . . [*He goes to bars and clutches them as he stares into the black corridor.*] and—it's cool. . . . Oh, please! . . . I'll throw my bucket at him . . . while he's cursing me I'll get his gun . . . if I only had one swallow . . . just one . . . it's on the floor . . . in drops . . . but when the keeper comes I'll . . . ah-h-h!

JOE. [*briskly.*] You're a sick boy, Jack.

JACK. [*wildly.*] I ain't so sick I can't put it over on him when he comes with his can of water. You wait. I'll put it over on all of them. They think they'll starve me to death. I'll show 'em! I'll show the whole lot. Casey too, Dan . . . I don't care if he is a friend of yours . . . he's a damned . . . I'll get water. . . . I'll just take my bucket and throw it at the keeper . . . he won't be looking for that. [*He laughs horribly.*] . . . Oh, I'm sick!

JOE. Men sicker than you have been here, Jack. You tell us all about it, old man.

JACK. [*speaking in gasps.*] I was sick when Casey sent us that stuff. [*Yelling.*] He did send it, Dan! I heard the P. K. I tell you . . . Joe, I'm sick . . . I want to go to the hospital!

JOE. [*soothingly.*] Maybe you can in the morning.

JACK. [*now utterly delirious begins beating with his cup on the iron floor. He keeps it up until the curtain falls. His voice rises and falls in a steady singsong.*] Kill me, will you? Wait . . . you wait. Wait till you come in. You won't have a chance . . . not a chance. I'll jump at you, and . . . Ah-h-h-! [*His voice wails away in a long moan.*]

[*The curtain falls for a moment to indicate,*

for the second time, the passing of hours. Silence.

[*The curtain rises to show the cells lit by the faint, gray light of early morning.* DAN *lies flat on his back, breathing heavily.* JACK *coughs pitiably, but does not wake.* JOE *is sleeping quietly. Suddenly the dynamo in the power house next door starts up for the day. Its beat and throb are endless, implacable. It continues to the end of the act. Next the levers opening the cell-rows in the building above can be heard clicking. Click! Click! Click! Click! Four times repeated; sixteen in all. Then the tramp of the marching men leaving their cells follows, rhythmically. As the sound of the feet dies away there is a pause.* JACK *coughs.* DAN *grunts like an animal with the night-mare. The grate of a key is heard in the door of the jail. The bolts are shot back.* JACK *coughs again, and* JOE *open his eyes and half sits up with a start. Keepers* SCOTT *and* FRANCIS *come in.* FRANCIS *goes to the clothes locker while* SCOTT *goes to* JOE'S *cell.* SCOTT *opens the door of No. 1 and leaves it open.*

SCOTT. Joseph Ruffio?

JOE. [*trembling with eagerness.*] Number one, sir. Do I get out now?

SCOTT. Yes. Come out. Change your clothes.

[DAN *wakes easily and listens during the following.* JOE, *followed by* SCOTT, *goes to the anteroom where* FRANCIS *has put out his clothes on the bench.* JOE *slips out of his jail suit and puts on his regular prison clothes. As he puts on the coat he sees that the disk and stripe have been taken off.*

JOE. These aren't my clothes! I had a disk and a good conduct stripe.

SCOTT. [*impatiently.*] Well?

JOE. [*looking from him to* FRANCIS.] They're gone.

SCOTT. Say, come on now. You know you don't keep good conduct stripes when you go to the cooler. Do you think you've been on a Sunday school picnic? Hurry up—unless you want to stay here.

[JOE *says nothing more, but hurries on with his clothes.* SCOTT *goes out and* JOE *follows him.* FRANCIS *turns out the light again and goes out, locking the door behind him.* DAN *groans, yawns*

noisily, stretches himself, and gives a disgusted grunt. The door rattles, and a key is heard again. DAN *listens.* SCOTT *comes in alone and goes at once to* DAN'S *cell.*

SCOTT. [*to* DAN *through the grating.*] Wake, Dan?

DAN. [*tensely.*] Sure.

SCOTT. Visitor for you. Wait a minute.

[*While* DAN *sits nervously waiting,* SCOTT *goes back to the outer door and looks out.*

SCOTT. [*to someone outside.*] All right, sir.

[CASEY *comes in and waits while* SCOTT *locks the door again. Then* SCOTT *takes him to* DAN'S *cell and unlocks the door which squeals on its hinges.* JACK *coughs and wakes up.* CASEY *appears in* DAN'S *cell.*

DAN. [*under his breath.*] Mr. Casey. . . .

CASEY. Shut up, Dan. [*Sharply.*] Anybody else in here, Scott?

SCOTT. [*who has been standing in the door of the cell.*] Wilson—in number two; two doors away.

DAN. My cell-mate. He's a pal.

CASEY. Don't trust nobody!

DAN. He's sick anyway.

CASEY. Keep your eye out, Scott.

SCOTT. Yes, sir.

[SCOTT *closes the cell door and goes and sits on the bench in the anteroom. During this* JACK *has wakened fully. He stretches slowly and painfully, holding his head between his hands. He reaches for his cup and, finding it empty, moans a little, remembering.* CASEY *is not wholly at ease. He takes out a cigar and chews it.*

DAN. Good of you, Mr. Casey, to. . . .

CASEY. Nothing. Sorry you didn't get your pardon, Dan. [*Champs on his cigar.*]

DAN. Damn hard luck. It's the Governor.

CASEY. He's a fool. All reformers are, Dan. Thinks he'll turn our State into a little heaven on earth.

DAN. Well—I should worry.

CASEY. [*feeling his way slowly.*] Every boy in the ward is sore over your pardon. The Governor made a lot of enemies when he did that.

DAN. The boys have been mighty good to me.

CASEY. They like you, Dan. [*Chews steadily.*] Don't blame 'em. Like you myself.

DAN. Huh! [*Embarrassed.*] Quit your kidding.

CASEY. Let me have my little joke—eh, Dan?

DAN. Sure thing, Mr. Casey.

CASEY. Stopped in to see your mother the other day. Smart old lady, Dan. And that girl, Maizy—some kid!

DAN. [*eagerly.*] Maizy's like her mother—quick.

CASEY. [*leading up to his point.*] Getting to be quite a woman, the little scrap. Made me a cup of tea, she did!

DAN. [*heavily.*] Casey, I ain't seen Maizy in fourteen months.

CASEY. Well, she's grown, I'll bet, in that time so you'd hardly know her. [*He plays with* DAN'S *emotion.*] You won't see her for some time either, I'm thinking.

DAN. I'll serve out the rest of my bit, I guess . . . there'll be no chance till there's a new administration.

CASEY. [*lowering his voice.*] Dan, how'd you like to see the kid—well say, next week?

DAN. [*staring at him.*] What's the use of kidding me, Mr. Casey?

CASEY. [*raising his voice again.*] I'm giving you straight stuff, Dan.

[*When* CASEY'S *voice rises,* JACK *who has been sitting on the floor of his cell, gets up and goes to the grating in his door. He listens.*

JACK. Joe, did you say something?

[SCOTT *springs from his bench and goes to* JACK'S *door.* CASEY *and* DAN *are tense and silent.*

SCOTT. Here, you. Shut your noise. Ruffio went upstairs long ago.

JACK. I heard someone talking to Dan.

[CASEY *stands with his finger on his lips.*

SCOTT. You're off your nut. You're hearing things. How could anyone be talking to Dan?

JACK. [*pausing an instant.*] Dan! You been talking?

[DAN *hesitates a moment.* CASEY *makes violent signs for him to say No.*

DAN. [*blurts out.*] You're dreaming, Jack. Joe's gone.

SCOTT. You lie down there and mind your own business!

[CASEY *goes on talking to* DAN *in dumb show for a moment.* JACK *lies down again slowly, unconvinced, and still listening.* DAN'S *face as he listens to* CASEY, *shows surprise and then frank incredulity, and finally, utter disbelief, as* CASEY *tries to convince him of the truth of what he is saying.*

DAN. Don't con me, Mr. Casey!

CASEY. I speak truth! The boys say to

me—Dan is a friend of ours. He's a good friend, the kind that would do anything for a pal. We want to help him. *You* can help him, Mr. Casey, they say to me.

DAN. [*much moved.*] They're good friends to me, all right.

CASEY. Help Dan, they say. The Governor won't give him no pardon because he's a stinking reformer. Well—let's get him out another way then.

[DAN'S *eyes grow wide. He clenches his fists.*

CASEY. Dan—what I say is the straight goods. If you'll take a chance, and beat it, out of this, you'll get all the help you need—inside and out!

DAN. The guards. . . . Oh, I couldn't make it!

CASEY. Sure you could. Buck up, man!

DAN. [*his voice rising.*] How could I?

JACK. [*springing upright.*] Dan?

[*At a sign from* CASEY, DAN *answers.*

DAN. What's yours, Jack?

[SCOTT *has again risen from his bench, but this time he goes, not to* JACK, *but to* CASEY. *He opens the door of* DAN'S *cell, and he and* CASEY *talk a moment in low tones.*

JACK. Ain't you been talking, Dan?

DAN. Pipe-dreams, old man. Lie down and forget it.

[SCOTT *leaves* CASEY *and goes to* JACK'S *cell, where he speaks to Jack through the grating. His attitude has changed to one of the greatest friendliness.*

SCOTT. Say, kid, what do you want most in the world?

JACK. [*eagerly.*] Water!

SCOTT. Hold on then.

[SCOTT *goes out to the bench near which stands a can of water and the keeper's funnel. He takes these up and goes back to* JACK'S *cell. Meanwhile the whispered conversation between* CASEY *and* DAN *goes on.* SCOTT *thrusts the end of his funnel through* JACK'S *grating.*

JACK. [*hoarsely.*] Water!

SCOTT. [*soothingly.*] Go to it, Wilson.

JACK *scrambles for his cup which he holds to the mouth of the funnel.* CASEY *continues to urge* DAN *in an indistinguishable tone.* JACK *holds his cup which* SCOTT *fills and refills while* JACK *drinks.*

DAN. [*in a low voice.*] But I work inside.

CASEY. I'll fix that. And I'll make it right with—[*his voice drops again.*]

[*There is a moment's pause; the beat and throb of the motor is the only sound.* DAN *is tense.*

JACK. [*with a long, quivering breath.*] I can't . . . any more. [*He staggers across the cell into a corner, where he slips to the floor.*]

[DAN *has not moved.* SCOTT *goes grinning back to the bench.* CASEY *watches* DAN *intently. He waits for a moment.* JACK *is quiet.* DAN'S *breath comes in long gasps.*

CASEY. [*keenly.*] Well, Dan?

DAN. [*lifting his head slowly and looking* CASEY *straight in the eyes. He draws a long breath.*] I'll do it, Mr. Casey!

[CASEY'S *face lights with triumph. He slaps* DAN *on the back.* DAN'S *face is set for battle.*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT III

THE Warden's office. Right are two long French windows. Back is a door, the only one, and Left, a safe and letter files. Center is the Warden's large, flat top desk, with a swivel desk-chair behind it. Down stage Left is a wash-stand, around which is a great leather screen. This screen serves to hide the wash-stand from the people on the stage, but not from the audience. The room is cold looking with an indefinable air of menace. From the windows can be seen a bit of the prison yard, and a corner of the cell-block.

CALVIN *is standing near the window looking intently into the yard. As the curtain rises he turns away nervously and paces the room once or twice. The telephone on his desk rings and he jumps to answer it.*

CALVIN. Yes? [*His voice changes—all the life leaves it.*] Tell him I can see no one to-night.

[*He walks back to the window impatiently. There is the sound of someone coming outside the door and he listens anxiously*

until the footsteps die away. Then, with a long sigh of disappointment, he seats himself at his desk. He takes the telephone.

CALVIN. The Principal Keeper.

[*There is a knock at the door and* CALVIN *leaps in his chair.*

CALVIN. Come in!

[*The door opens to show* CASEY *standing on the threshold.* CALVIN *frowns, but* CASEY *without waiting for an invitation, enters.*

CALVIN. [*turning back to the telephone.*] Is Mr. King with the search party? Well, if the orders for to-morrow are on his desk, please send them in to me at once. I'll sign them now. [*He hesitates, and then adds tensely.*] No news?

[CASEY *is all attention although he seems to be engrossed with the cold cigar he is chewing.*

CALVIN. Thanks. [*He hangs up the receiver and turns to* CASEY.] Mr. Casey, I—

CASEY. [*breaking in affably.*] They told me you were busy, but I said I'd come right in. [CALVIN *stares at him in growing amazement and anger.*] Thought you'd be glad of diversion. Ain't all roses being Warden of this shebang, is it?

CALVIN. [*icily.*] No.

CASEY. We-e-ll. . . .

CALVIN. [*in a burst of cold rage.*] Mr. Casey, by what right do you enter this room? When you telephoned I refused to see you. That still holds good. I cannot see anyone tonight.

CASEY. [*grinning.*] Hospitable, ain't you?

CALVIN. If your business is very important. . . .

[CASEY *starts to speak, but* CALVIN *cuts him off.*

CALVIN. I can't listen now. It may be that later in the evening I can give you a moment.

CASEY. You're the boss, Warden, you're the boss. I'll drop in later. Oh re-voir!

[*He moves smoothly to the door, and with a wave of his hand, vanishes. When the door has closed behind* CASEY *there is a muttered ejaculation from* CALVIN. *He sits at the desk, glancing idly through the papers that strew the top, and then with a long sigh sits for a moment with his head in his hands.*

From outside there comes a low rumbling, the banging of metal, the shouts of keepers, and the yells of prisoners.

The noise grows rapidly in volume until it is a cursing, screaming pandemonium. Almost before it reaches CALVIN'S *consciousness, a sharp knock at the door brings him to his feet.*

CALVIN. Come!

[KING *throws the door open. The two men stare at each other for a moment.* KING *is evidently much excited, but his face looks sullen.*

CALVIN. They've found him?

KING. He's in his cell.

CALVIN. Where was he?

KING. Not five minutes outside the walls.

CALVIN. Man, he's been gone for hours!

KING. [*with some resentment.*] He was asleep.

CALVIN. Asleep!

KING. [*disgusted.*] Drunk—in a hollow tree. [*lower.*] The poor fool.

CALVIN. [*thoughtfully, with a sharp look at* KING.] Drunk.

[*The disturbance outside dies slowly away. From the moment of* KING'S *entrance* CALVIN *becomes active again.*

CALVIN. [*with sudden decision.*] I shall thrash this out *now.*

KING. It's late, Warden.

CALVIN. [*looking at his watch.*] I'll take time

for something to eat. It's nine o'clock now. Did you have dinner? [KING *nods.*] I didn't. Is Moyne sober yet?

KING. Yes—he'd slept most of it off. But it's—

CALVIN. The sooner we examine him, the less time he has to cook up a story. [*Keenly.*] A confession will save trouble all around.

KING. He was getting away fast enough.

CALVIN. [*suddenly.*] Where did he get his whiskey?

KING. [*blank and then defiant.*] I don't know.

CALVIN. [*in his old brisk tone.*] Have him here in twenty minutes. And his cell-mate—[*hesitates.*]

KING. Wilson.

CALVIN. [*watching* KING.] And the keeper in charge of the road-gang from which Moyne escaped.

KING. [*swallowing.*] I'll find out who it was, sir.

CALVIN. [*swiftly.*] Don't you *know?*

KING. I think it was Scott.

CALVIN. [*without emotion.*] We shall want Scott.

[*There is a pause.* CALVIN *thinks hard.* KING *shifts from one foot to the other, stealing glances at his superior. There*

is a knock at the door. CALVIN *goes to it and receives from someone outside the orders he has asked for. He keeps them in his hand.*

CALVIN. [*through the door as he closes it.*] Thank you. [*To* KING.] Who caught Moyne?

KING. Francis.

CALVIN. Bring Francis too. [*Glances at the papers he is holding.*] I'll get these orders signed for you so that nothing need interrupt us if the examination keeps us late. That's all. [*He watches* KING *as he goes toward the door.*] Better eat something, King. This business has fagged us all.

[KING *goes out with a nod.* CALVIN *looks at the papers on his desk. He takes up the telephone without sitting down.*

CALVIN. [*in a tired voice.*] The kitchen. . . . Martin? How soon can you have something for me to eat? Oh, then I'll come at once—put it on the table. What? Yes, you can leave on the six-thirty train. Come in and say good-bye before you go. I shall be up most of the night, I think.

[CALVIN *glances again at the papers on his desk, and after a moment's thought, grimly gathers them all up and puts them into the desk drawer which he locks.*

CALVIN *leaves the room and there is a moment's silence.*

There is a knock at the door, twice repeated. The door opens and CASEY *slides in. He goes to the desk and looks over it, and finding nothing, takes a key from his vest pocket and unlocks the drawer. He finds the papers with a grunt of delight which changes to one of disgust as he sees that they are still unsigned. He swears under his breath and glances over the desk again only to turn away disappointed. There is a sudden knock at the door.* CASEY *has a moment of panic. Then he goes over and slips in behind the big screen. The knock is repeated, and the door opens to admit* KING *who hesitates upon the threshold.* CASEY, *who has been peering through a crack in the screen, now comes out.*

CASEY. Calm yourself.

KING. You'd better keep out of this.

CASEY. Where's the Warden?

KING. Eating something.

CASEY. Then keep your shirt on. He won't have an appetite long. Here's what I came after. Had to use your key to get 'em. [*He motions towards the papers which he still holds.*] They

aren't signed yet, worse luck. It's a good lot—several in pencil—easy to—[*he makes a gesture of erasure.*]

KING. [*irritably.*] I wish you'd let 'em alone. Ain't it bad enough to have Dan Moyne caught?

CASEY. I want those orders. As soon as he signs 'em and gives them to you—you slip them over to me.

[KING *starts to protest.*

CASEY. Oh, your hide's safe enough. Dates will be changed as well as—other things. You can say you mislaid them in the excitement.

KING. You're safely out of this—

CASEY. No safer than you. Nobody can touch us, King. You hand the orders over. That's all you have to do. His papers may be straight now, but a little changing will make 'em incriminating enough to damn a saint. Then we have our high and mighty Warden by the neck. [*He makes an unpleasant gesture of pulling a noose tight under his left ear, and chuckles.*] Violent deaths run in the family. Son killed himself, didn't he? [KING *nods.*] Maybe Pa will follow suit!

KING. I don't want to take such long chances.

CASEY. [*impatiently.*] Well, I got an order for them, if that makes you feel any better. [*He takes from his pocket a paper in a blue*

envelope which KING *reads.* CASEY *grins.*] You notice it don't specify *what* papers. I can take any I want—and with authority.

KING. [*brightening.*] If you give the Warden this [*tapping letter*] he'll have to give you the papers himself.

CASEY. [*taking the letter and putting it back in his pocket.*] I'll give him the letter *after* I've got the papers in my pocket.

KING. But it's so much easier to do the other thing.

CASEY. The fancy Warden is getting foxy. He might have the originals witnessed to or some such nonsense. [*Suddenly severe.*] You do as you're told!

KING. [*sulkily.*] Oh, very well. [*Flaring up again.*] You don't seem to realize that Moyne's getting caught puts us in the hell of a hole!

CASEY. [*grunts.*] Dan is safe enough.

[CASEY *goes over to the desk and replaces the papers in the drawer, leisurely locking it again.*

KING. He could give the whole thing away like that. [*Snaps his fingers.*]

CASEY. [*coolly.*] He thinks I'm a pal of his. I took care of that when I picked him for the job. . . . Dan won't squeal on a pal.

KING. You can't tell what the skunk will do. I wish he'd made his getaway.

CASEY. [*assenting.*] He was a fool to drink the whole bottle. It was put there to give him nerve, not to get soused on.

KING. He'd been in the cooler for a week with nothing much to eat.

CASEY. Hard luck. I wish he'd made it.

KING. [*flatly.*] Well, I'm damned nervous.

CASEY. Oh, come on. Don't fret about Dan. He's the real goods; hates the Warden like poison. He won't squeal. And when those orders [*pointing to desk*] get up to the Chief—good-night, Mr. Calvin!

[KING *shakes his head in uncertainty.* CASEY *moves to him and puts a hand on his shoulder.*

CASEY. Cheer up, man! You hand me the papers and I'll leave the note as I go. He knows I'm waiting to see him. I told him so myself so he wouldn't think there was anything phony about it if he heard I was here. It's up to you to get me those orders before I have to make good on my bluff. Then our tracks are covered all right.

[*With a final slap on the back he slips to the door, looks out, and goes.*

CASEY. [*as he exits.*] I'll wait for you in the outside office.

[KING *growls to himself when the door has closed on* CASEY. *He walks over to the window and stands looking out into the dark yard. The rumble and roar of the men rises again suddenly from the cell-block. There are footsteps outside the door.* KING *jumps nervously and crosses quickly to a chair where he sits waiting. The door opens to admit* CALVIN.

CALVIN. [*briefly.*] Ready.

KING. [*moving his head toward the growing uproar.*] They're bringing him.

CALVIN. Do you think there will be trouble?

KING. Men are in a bad state. You're too easy on them.

[CALVIN *makes an enigmatical sound, with a swift glance at* KING. *The noise outside seems to come nearer and nearer.* CALVIN *goes to his desk and seats himself.* KING *goes over to the window again and stands looking out, but his eyes furtively seek* CALVIN *who, however, is not paying the slightest attention to him. Suddenly the riot outside ceases. There is a moment of silence and then a quick knock on the door.* KING *goes at once to*

the door and throws it open. DAN MOYNE, JACK WILSON, *Keepers* SCOTT *and* FRANCIS *enter. They stop in a group in front of the Warden's desk. At a gesture from* CALVIN, KING *brings a chair to the desk beside the Warden and seats himself.*

CALVIN. Daniel Moyne, step forward.

[DAN *does so. He is haggard and unkempt, and at first his eyes droop, almost as if he were in a stupor. As the situation grows more tense, this apathy is succeeded by a resentful sullenness which grows more and more vigorous. He is like a small boy who has resolved to brazen it out.*

CALVIN. Moyne, you are accused of trying to escape. You know, as every inmate of this prison knows, that attempted escape is no light offense. You'll be given a chance to defend yourself. What term are you serving?

[DAN *does not answer.* JACK, *who is as pale and thinner than* DAN, *listens alertly to all that goes on.* CALVIN *turns inquiringly to King.*

KING. Six years, I think.

CALVIN. Moyne?

DAN. Six to twenty-four.

CALVIN. [*startled.*] You are serving the minimum sentence for your offense—six years—and the maximum is twenty-four years?

[DAN *growls assent.*

CALVIN. Do you know that when a man serving less than his maximum sentence tries to escape, he is compelled by law to serve out his full term—in your case twenty-four years—and that the County Court may add several years to this at their discretion—as punishment?

[*There is a pause.* DAN *makes no reply, but his hands clench and his body stiffens.*

CALVIN. That's the law. . . . Francis.

[FRANCIS *steps forward.*

CALVIN. You found Moyne?

FRANCIS. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. Where?

FRANCIS. Hill-top to the north, sir.

CALVIN. What was he doing?

FRANCIS. [*with a smile.*] Sleeping, Warden. He was in a big hollow tree in a stupor, sir, with an empty whisky bottle in his hand.

CALVIN. [*to* KING.] Where have repairs been made on the road?

KING. At the foot of the hill.

CALVIN. [*to* FRANCIS.] How far from the tree is that?

FRANCIS. Two hundred yards, I should say.

CALVIN. Thank you. [*to* DAN.] What were you doing in that tree, Moyne?

[*No answer.*

CALVIN. When did you come out of the punishment cells?

KING. A week. . . .

CALVIN. [*stopping* KING.] Moyne?

DAN. Week yesterday.

CALVIN. You were put on the road-gang at once? [DAN *nods.*] Your idea, wasn't it, King?

KING. [*uneasily.*] He was in bad shape from the cooler. I had no idea. . . .

CALVIN. [*smoothly.*] Naturally not. [*To* DAN.] How did you get to the tree from the foot of the hill? [*Pause.*] How did you get to the tree?

DAN. Hid in the long grass. When the rest of the bunch had gone inside I crawled to the tree.

CALVIN. No one saw you?

DAN. No.

CALVIN. Where was the keeper?

[SCOTT *moves slightly.*

DAN. There.

CALVIN. What?

DAN. He was there.

CALVIN. Couldn't he see you?

DAN. He might! [*He grins.*]

[*At this a stir runs through the room.* KING *carefully avoids looking at anyone.* SCOTT *shifts from one foot to the other.* JACK *moves toward* DAN. CALVIN *tightens.*

CALVIN. Why did you go to the tree?

[*Silence.*

CALVIN. You wanted to hide so that you could escape after dark, didn't you?

[JACK *half speaks, and the others listen closely.*

DAN. [*uncertainly.*] No. . . .

CALVIN. Then why did you go to the tree?

DAN. [*gulping.*] To get the whisky.

CALVIN. To get the whisky hidden in the tree. [*Pause.*] And then?

DAN. [*with relief.*] I drank it. That's all I remember till—he—found me.

CALVIN. How did you know the whisky was in the tree?

DAN. [*seeing the trap.*] I didn't!

CALVIN. You just said you went to the tree to get the whisky. Isn't that true? . . . Where did the whisky come from?

DAN. [*doggedly.*] I don't know.

CALVIN. Then you went to the tree not knowing it was there?

[DAN *glances from side to side, but makes no answer.*

CALVIN. Come, Moyne, answer.

DAN. I don't know.

CALVIN. Either you knew the whisky was there or you didn't.

DAN. I've told you all I know.

CALVIN. If you did not know the whisky was there, you must have gone to the tree to hide until you could escape. If you *did* know it was there. . . .

DAN. I've told you all I know.

CALVIN. You won't answer any further questions? Then step back.

[DAN *steps back, and everyone, except* CALVIN, *draws a long sigh of relief.*

CALVIN. Mr. Scott.

[SCOTT *comes forward. His attitude is one of defense and defiance.*

SCOTT. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. You were in charge of the road-gang from which Moyne escaped?

SCOTT. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. Did you count the men when they came back into the prison yard?

SCOTT. [*shaking his head.*] When they passed into the cell-block, sir.

CALVIN. That must have been about five o'clock.

SCOTT. A few minutes after five.

CALVIN. What did you do then?

SCOTT. Reported to the Principal Keeper.

CALVIN. [*sharply.*] It was six o'clock before the whistle blew.

[*He makes the statement sharply, yet simply.* KING *shifts in his chair.* DAN *glances at the keeper and then at* KING. JACK *looks at* CALVIN *as if trying to read his face. There is a pause and then the moment passes.* JACK *seems always more interested in what* SCOTT *says than in anything else.*

CALVIN. Do you know anything about the whisky that Moyne says he found in the hollow tree?

SCOTT. No, sir.

CALVIN. What is your regular duty?

SCOTT. Hall-keeper in the cell-block, sir.

CALVIN. Were you on duty there when Moyne was sent to the cooler for drunkenness?

SCOTT. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. [*to* KING.] Nothing was ascertained of that whisky, King.

SCOTT. [*quickly to* CALVIN.] I knew nothing of that, sir.

CALVIN. [*watching him quietly.*] Of course not.

[CALVIN *continues to look for a moment steadily at* SCOTT, *who feels that he has made a mistake and is consequently uncomfortable.* KING *scowls at* SCOTT. CALVIN *looks at* JACK *who is watching* SCOTT *intently.*

CALVIN. [*abruptly.*] Wilson.

[JACK *steps forward, and* SCOTT *drops back.*

CALVIN. You are Moyne's cell-mate?

JACK. [*rather breathlessly.*] Yes, sir.

CALVIN. How long have you locked-in the same cell?

JACK. Ever since I came here, sir; six weeks.

CALVIN. Nothing you say will be used against you in any way, Wilson. I want the truth. Did you and Moyne ever talk of escape?

JACK. No, sir. Dan was expecting a pardon, sir,—

CALVIN. And when you were together in the dark cells, after his pardon had been refused?

JACK. No, sir.

CALVIN. And when you came out of punishment?

JACK. I went into the hospital.

CALVIN. Oh, so you didn't go back to your own cell?

JACK. No, sir.

CALVIN. Is there any information you can give me relative to Moyne's being found in the hollow tree?

[JACK *has been showing throughout this scene a restless, half desire to speak. Now he gulps and, looking at* DAN, *hesitates.*

JACK. No, sir.

[KING *draws a breath of evident relief.* SCOTT *too, is pleased.* DAN *smiles at* JACK. CALVIN *speaks sharply.*

CALVIN. Very well, Wilson. [*He glances around the room.*] This is merely a beginning. I shall know more—by the time I have finished with Moyne.

[DAN *shudders involuntarily at the menace in* CALVIN'S *tone. A look passes between* KING *and* SCOTT. JACK *sees it. He glances at* DAN *who is steeling himself. Suddenly* JACK *makes up his mind and moves forward.*

JACK. Mr. Calvin!

[*The change in his tone electrifies the room.*

CALVIN. Well?

JACK. Can I see you alone, sir?

CALVIN. No. Anything you have to say must be said here and now. What is it?

[JACK *hesitates. He does not like this, but he feels that he has gone too far to retreat.*

JACK. I'm fond of Dan, sir. He's a good pal. I want him to get a square deal.

CALVIN. He will be treated fairly.

JACK. He ain't been, sir. Somebody is trying to double-cross Dan.

CALVIN. What do you mean?

JACK. Dan is getting a dirty deal. [CALVIN *looks up sharply.*] Oh, it ain't you, sir. I don't know who it is, but. . . . [*He hesitates, puzzled.*]

CALVIN. [*impatiently.*] Do you know something or are you guessing?

JACK. I ain't guessing. *Somebody* is double-crossing Dan.

[*Again the thrill runs around the room.* KING *is trying to make out just what* JACK *knows.* SCOTT *is very uneasy.* JACK *is wholly self-possessed.*

CALVIN. [*impressed.*] What makes you think that?

JACK. Two things.

[*Suddenly* CALVIN *sees* JACK *for the first time, not as a convict, but as an intelli-*

gent human being. He speaks to him in a new tone.

CALVIN. Will you tell me what they are?

JACK. When we was in the cooler, somebody came to see Dan. . . .

CALVIN. What!

JACK. Dan and the keeper pretended there was nobody there. But I heard them both—Dan's voice and the other. The other voice was different—I'd never heard it before.

CALVIN. [*leaning forward.*] Wilson. You say that Moyne had a visitor while he was in the punishment cells?

[KING *squirms, and* SCOTT *is restless.*

JACK. Yes, sir.

DAN. [*in a quick undertone.*] Aw—you was loony from sickness.

JACK. [*to* CALVIN.] Dan kept telling me I was queer in the head, sir, but I know I heard them talking. . . . And the cell door opened and shut.

CALVIN. [*to* KING.] Would it be possible for Moyne to have a visitor in the punishment cells?

KING. No, Warden. Keeper, probably.

[CALVIN *turns back to* JACK. JACK *shakes his head.*

JACK. The keeper came with him—to let him in.

CALVIN. [*pleased, nods.*] A keeper would have let himself in. You are sure there was a keeper there—beside the other?

JACK. [*involuntarily turning to* SCOTT.] Why yes, sir. He gave me water to drink while they were talking. . . . Keepers don't give you water for nothing, Warden. I'd been sick all night, and begging for water.

[SCOTT *stares furiously at* JACK. CALVIN *turns and looks at* SCOTT.]

CALVIN. Keeper Scott was on duty there? [*With bitter emphasis.*] You move about a good deal, Scott. [SCOTT *starts to speak.*] The cell-block, the road-gang, and now the jail.

SCOTT. [*taking a chance.*] He was out of his head, Warden—raving. I gave him water because he was making threats.

KING. [*too quickly.*] Wilson was a sick man, Warden, when we took him out of the jail.

CALVIN. [*to* JACK; *sarcastically.*] The consensus of opinion, Wilson, is that you were raving. However, I want to hear *all* you have to say. It is your opinion that Moyne had a visitor who was not a keeper. Another prisoner?

JACK. Only Dan and me was in the jail, sir. Ruffio had just been taken out. . . . And Dan didn't talk like he would to a pal.

CALVIN. Then this *call* took place on the morning of Ruffio's release from punishment?

JACK. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. At what time do you think?

JACK. Early—about six-thirty.

CALVIN. [*startled.*] What—in the morning?

[JACK *nods.* KING *and* SCOTT *grow in perturbation.*

CALVIN. You think that someone from outside the prison saw Moyne at that hour?

JACK. Yes, sir. And I think it's the same man that sent Dan a present of whisky to make him drunk. I told Dan then, and Joe Ruffio told him, that man *wants* something.

CALVIN. Wants what?

JACK. Well—if Dan made his getaway, you'd look pretty cheap, wouldn't you, Mr. Calvin? Is the whole world so dead for you that nobody wouldn't like to see you lose this job? You wouldn't be the first Warden that got framed up and jolted out of office.

[KING *and* SCOTT *are genuinely and frankly frightened.* DAN *has become alert. He is a different man from the sullen, dull creature who came into the room. He is also deeply enraged with* JACK.

CALVIN. You mean—?

JACK. Dan did try to beat it, Warden. But it was a plain frame-up—and he's not to blame. Somebody else got him into it. And they don't just say to him, here's something for you if you make your getaway; they pretend to be friends with him, and help him. . . . But what they want is something for themselves!

DAN. [*in a low, tense voice.*] Shut up, Jack. Keep out of this!

CALVIN. [*to* JACK, *convinced by his earnestness.*] Do you know who this man is?

DAN. [*to* JACK *again.*] Jack! [*to* CALVIN *in an appealing tone.*] He was sick, sir, and when the keeper slipped us the whisky—

CALVIN. [*cutting in.*] The keeper, eh?

[DAN *gasps.* SCOTT *cringes.* KING *glares at* DAN.

DAN. [*frightened, and on the defensive.*] It ain't the first time a keeper has done a man a favor—and got him a bit of—

JACK. [*flashing at him.*] It's the first time he ever *gave* it to us! And [*pointing to* SCOTT] he knows who sent it.

[SCOTT'S *guilt is written all over his face. There is a moment's pause.* KING *half rises from his chair.*

SCOTT. I do not! [*Snarling at* JACK.] You damned rat!

CALVIN. [*whirling on* SCOTT.] You be quiet! [*to* JACK.] We'll see. [*He takes up the 'phone and says into it.*] I wish to consult the General Register—the Visitors' Book. Yes, here, at once. [*He rises, and going to the filing cabinet, unlocks it, takes out a drawer, and looks through the cards.*] Ruffio was released from punishment at six o'clock on the morning of the twelfth. [*He smiles at* JACK *grimly.*] You were sane enough to know the time of day, Wilson.

JACK. Yes, sir.

[*There is a knock at the door.* CALVIN *motions to* FRANCIS *and goes back to his desk. The room is tense and silent.* FRANCIS *goes quickly to the door and opens it far enough for him to take in the great Prison Register which is handed to him from someone outside. He takes it at once to* CALVIN. KING *and* SCOTT *look at each other.* SCOTT *looks as if he would like to run.* KING *scowls at him.* CALVIN *opens the book in silence. He runs his finger down the page while they all watch him.* SCOTT *still furtively looks at the door.* KING *is white with rage at* SCOTT *and* JACK, *and with a great uneasiness for his own skin.* CALVIN'S *finger stops, and his face*

shows that he has found something. He reaches for the telephone and then hesitates. Then with a sharp glance at JACK, *he takes a pencil and writes on a card.*

CALVIN. Mr. Francis.

[FRANCIS *goes to him and* CALVIN *in an inaudible voice gives him instructions.* KING, *who has been trying hard to listen to* CALVIN, *jumps suddenly.* FRANCIS *nods and goes to the door.*

CALVIN. [*to* FRANCIS.] At once, please.

FRANCIS. Yes, sir. [*Exits.*]

[KING *rises with great nonchalance.*

KING. Warden, if you'll excuse me a moment. . . .

CALVIN. I will detain you only a few minutes longer, Mr. King.

[KING *sits down again. He waits closely. There is a moment of silence. Then outside,* CASEY'S *voice is heard.* KING *rises again that he may attract* CASEY'S *attention when he enters and warn him.* DAN *and* CALVIN *watch* JACK *who has moved forward at the sound of* CASEY'S *voice.*

CASEY. [*outside.*] I dropped in to see him a little earlier, but I know how it is with busy

men. I'm busy myself sometimes. Shall we go right in? I suppose this escape now. . . .

[FRANCIS *throws the door open.* CASEY *comes in. For a moment* CASEY *is nonplussed by all the people he sees.* KING *makes a desperate effort to attract his attention, but fails to do so.* JACK *searches* CASEY'S *face and finds it unfamiliar.* CALVIN *and* DAN *still watch* JACK.

CASEY. [*with unfailing sang froid.*] Decided to see me after all, Warden?

[JACK *half takes a breath and nods a little.* CALVIN *waits.* DAN *turns to* CASEY *as if he would shout to him to run.*

CASEY. [*with a chuckle.*] You seem to be having a regular show-down.

[JACK *whirls to* CALVIN. *The words seem to be torn out of him.*

JACK. That's the voice, Warden! Who is that man?

[*There is again a slight pause.* CALVIN *turns to* CASEY *who stares at* JACK *in amazement.* KING *sinks back into his chair.* DAN *makes a gesture of despair and anger.*

CALVIN. [*smiling, and with his finger on a line in the Register.*] Yes, come in, Mr. Casey.

I want to ask about a visit you paid Daniel Moyne, in the punishment cells, on [*consults Register*] the twelfth of this month, at six-thirty in the morning.

[*A slight flicker passes over* CASEY'S *face.* JACK *looks at* DAN *in triumph. At a signal from* CALVIN, FRANCIS *closes the door behind* CASEY *and stands in front of it.*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT IV

THE Warden's office, unchanged, except in time. It is just before dawn the next morning. At the opening of the action the window spaces show black, but during the act they gradually lighten, until at the close, the sun rises.

CALVIN *and* CASEY *sit on opposite sides of the desk.* CALVIN *is alert and dogged, though evidently somewhat baffled. His face is set and grim.* CASEY *chews his cold cigar with an affectation of boredom and easy sarcasm. After a moment of silence,* CASEY *yawns.*

CASEY. [*stretching.*] If you're going to make folks spend the night here, Warden, you ought to have a trundle bed in the office. [*He slides back in his chair.*]

[CALVIN *makes no reply. Another silence.* CASEY *yawns again.*

CASEY. Now in some men I'd take it hard.

[CALVIN, *although he watches* CASEY, *seems far away.* CASEY *looks at him sharply, grins, and takes a match from the box which stands in an ash tray on the desk.*

With seeming nonchalance he strikes the match suddenly on the box in an effort to startle CALVIN *to attention. As he does this the telephone bell rings sharply.* CASEY *leaps in his chair and the match goes out.* CALVIN *snatches the instrument.*

CALVIN. [*into the 'phone.*] Yes? Oh—yes, Martin, to-day. Stop on your way out. You can take the early train. [*He works the hook up and down.*] Where's Mr. Francis? He's discovered nothing yet?

[*As* CALVIN *returns the receiver to the hook, the tense offhandedness with which* CASEY *has been listening, vanishes. Unconsciously he reveals great relief. The strain has been telling, even upon him, and the result has been to exaggerate his ease.*

CASEY. Come now, Warden, throw down your cards. You're up against it. Why should Dan Moyne confess when he ain't got anything to tell? He tried to make a getaway. He didn't pull it off. You know that as well as I do. And you know that there's nothing in that crazy story of Wilson's!

CALVIN. [*snapping.*] I intend to find out just how much there is in it before morning.

CASEY. [*looking at his watch.*] My train

leaves at six-thirty. [CALVIN *scowls.*] Come, Warden, you can't keep me here forever. Last night I wanted to show you that you were suspecting me without any reason. You must see by this time that I was right. Better drop the whole matter.

[CALVIN *looks at him in unmoved silence.*

CASEY. You've got your runaway. What more do you want? If you must have blood, give him a little taste of discipline.

[CALVIN, *his face more stern than ever, looks steadily at* CASEY, *who becomes annoyed under this silent inspection.*

CASEY. Don't start something you can't finish, Warden. [CALVIN *moves, but does not look away.*] You can see you aren't fitted for this job. You take things too hard. Why not step out while you got the chance? We'd be glad to—

[CASEY *is leaning over the desk in friendly enthusiasm. There is a sudden knock at the door and* CALVIN *leaps to open it.* MARTIN, *dressed in his new suit of citizen's clothes stands on the threshold.*

MARTIN. Came to say good-bye, Warden.

CALVIN. Good-bye, Martin. My good wishes go with you.

MARTIN. [*his face aglow.*] This is a great day for me, sir. I've often dreamed of the day when

I'd leave, but I never thought it would be like this.

CALVIN. I'm glad of that.

MARTIN. You've always had friends, Warden. You don't know what it means to me to have a friend like Mrs. Calvin, sir. She's a saint from God, sir, begging your pardon, Warden.

[CALVIN *is slightly embarrassed.*

MARTIN. I'm going to a good job, sir. I'm going straight. I couldn't go wrong with her trusting me. Say—often when I was alone in your rooms I've stood by the door looking out. Nobody in sight. All I had to do was to walk out. But when I'd put my foot over the step—I'd see Mrs. Calvin, smiling a little, like she does, sir. That's why I ain't tried to run for it these last two months, Warden.

CALVIN. [*thoughtfully.*] I hope you'll keep your resolutions, Martin.

MARTIN. Do you think I'd hurt Mrs. Calvin? It ain't my place to say so, Warden, but I'm an old man and you'll excuse it. I wish every man could go out of this prison hopeful like me. I've been here sixteen years, Warden. I've seen lots of men come and go. And I've seen more men go with hate than hope.

[*There is a knock at the door, and* MARTIN *opens it.* MRS. CALVIN *and Keeper*

FRANCIS *stand outside.* FRANCIS *carries a small tray upon which is a pot of coffee and several cups.*

CALVIN. Mary!

MRS. CALVIN. Good-morning, John. I've brought you coffee.

CALVIN. You should be in bed.

MRS. CALVIN. [*shakes her head, smiling.*] When I saw how breakfast improved Mr. Francis—[*She nods to* FRANCIS *who has put the tray on the desk.* MRS. CALVIN *sits down behind it.*] Thank you. [*There is a slight pause during which* MRS. CALVIN *glances at* CASEY.] Mr. Casey, isn't it?

CALVIN. [*recovering himself.*] I beg your pardon, Mary. Mrs. Calvin—Mr. Casey.

[FRANCIS *withdraws upstage, where* MARTIN *is standing, watching* MRS. CALVIN *in fascinated admiration.* CASEY *rises, bows, and sits.*

CALVIN. One moment, Francis.

CASEY. [*to* MRS. CALVIN.] You're a ministering angel, Mrs. Calvin, a ministering angel.

MRS. CALVIN. Do you take sugar?

[CALVIN *has been listening to* FRANCIS *who has just been answering a question* CALVIN *put to him. Now* CALVIN'S *voice snaps back.*

CALVIN. Use every means in your power—force, if necessary.

[MRS. CALVIN *lifts her head, tensely.*

CALVIN. We must get at the truth of this one way or another.

MRS. CALVIN. John, you won't get at it by torturing Dan.

[CALVIN *hardens. He looks at his wife and then dismisses* FRANCIS *with a nod. There is silence while* FRANCIS *goes.* MARTIN *stands, forgotten, by the door.*

CASEY. [*nodding.*] Why, there's no truth to get at, in a man like that. Ain't I been saying so all along, Warden?

MRS. CALVIN. We mean different things, I think. I object to the method. . . .

CALVIN. [*dryly.*] Just what do you suggest, Mary?

MRS. CALVIN. I—I wish I knew.

CALVIN. I confess I'm ready to try anything. I must have the truth.

[MARTIN *moves forward with great interest, but he does not speak.*

CASEY. [*cheering up under the influence of the coffee.*] There's no such a thing as truth in a convict.

[MARTIN *moves again.*

MRS. CALVIN. You are wrong, Mr. Casey!

MARTIN. [*nervously.*] Excuse me. . . .

[*They all turn and look at him. He has been forgotten. He stops, embarrassed.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*kindly.*] Yes, Martin?

MARTIN. I can't help saying it! I can't help it! I knew Dan before he ever came here. . . . Dan's a square guy. . . . [*He hesitates again.*]

MRS. CALVIN. Yes?

MARTIN. He won't squeal on his friends. That's why he won't talk.

CALVIN. [*thoughtfully.*] That's what Wilson said.

MARTIN. It's true, Warden, but if. . . . [*Hesitates.*]

CALVIN. Well?

MARTIN. Let Mrs. Calvin speak to him, Warden. [*He turns to* MRS. CALVIN.] Talk to him like you talked to me, ma'am, about your trusting me. If you trust him, he'll be on the level with you. Honest, he will!

MRS. CALVIN. You think he'll tell me the truth?

MARTIN. I know he will, ma'am.

[*There is a short pause.*

CASEY. Trust that con—bah!

MARTIN. [*quickly.*] She trusted me.

[CALVIN *is thinking, looking from one to another of the trio.* MRS. CALVIN *has her eyes on* MARTIN.

MARTIN. I know—because she trusted me. Trust Dan, too, Mrs. Calvin. He'll be on the level.

MRS. CALVIN. [*briskly to* CALVIN.] Could I talk with Dan?

CALVIN. He's in his cell. You can't go there.

MRS. CALVIN. Bring him here.

CALVIN. What could you say to him . . .?

MRS. CALVIN. I don't know. I'll find something. Bring him here. [CALVIN *hesitates.*] Surely you have nothing to lose by letting me try. You said you'd use any means. Don't you remember his mother's visit? He listened to me then. Let me try, John!

CASEY. I agree with your husband, this time, Mrs. Calvin. It's tomfoolery—sentimentalism!

[CALVIN *gives* CASEY *one look and takes the telephone.* MRS. CALVIN *smiles a little and crosses to the window.*

CALVIN. [*into the 'phone.*] Francis . . . I want Moyne brought to the office. Yes . . . at once. [*He hangs up.*]

CASEY. [*crossing to* MRS. CALVIN.] You ladies let your feelings get the best of you. Moyne is just a crook. You can't trust him. For that matter—I know some things about *his* past. [*He indicates* MARTIN.]

MARTIN. [*steadily.*] So does Mrs. Calvin, Mr. Casey.

[*For a moment* CASEY *and* MARTIN *are eye to eye.*

MRS. CALVIN. I can't talk to Dan while Mr. Casey is here, John. [*To* CASEY.] You understand that, Mr. Casey.

CASEY. Certainly, certainly.

MRS. CALVIN. I'll have to be with Dan—alone.

CALVIN. [*shaking his head.*] That isn't possible, Mary. I shall insist on being here.

MRS. CALVIN. Don't you see that you and Mr. Casey will both frighten Dan? He won't dare say anything against either of you. I must see him alone.

CALVIN. Even if the prison rules allowed it, I could not, Mary.

CASEY. If I'm in Mrs. Calvin's way, I'd better run along. It'll be train time soon, anyhow, and I'll walk to the station.

CALVIN. Not yet—Mr. Casey.

MRS. CALVIN. Take Mr. Casey into the outer office, John. I must talk to Dan alone.

CASEY. [*turning away; jocular.*] What can I do? Warden won't let me go; Mrs. Calvin won't let me stay. *I'm* not interested, of course!

MRS. CALVIN. [*to her husband, in a lowered voice.*] Let me see Dan alone, dear.

CALVIN. [*to her in the same tone.*] I couldn't, Mary.

[CASEY, *who has been strolling aimlessly about the room, looks at the wash-stand about which is the great screen. This evidently recalls to him his past skirmishings, for he remarks in a bantering tone, not unaware of the irony:*

CASEY. Put me behind the screen, Mrs. Calvin! Put me behind the screen!

MRS. CALVIN. I have no intention of being anything but fair with Dan. You will have to take Mr. Casey away, John.

CALVIN. [*flatly.*] You cannot be left alone with a criminal who has just made a desperate attempt to escape.

[*There is a pause.*

MRS. CALVIN. Then I can do nothing. [*Involuntarily she turns to* MARTIN.]

MARTIN. [*his eyes aflame.*] Let them do it! If Dan's square with you, and tells you the truth, he won't be afraid of having it heard. It's more fair for him to have a chance than to be condemned without a hearing.

MRS. CALVIN. You really think so?

MARTIN. Yes! Yes, Mrs. Calvin. You

believe somebody is double-crossing Dan, and that he won't squeal, don't you? If you really trust him—it won't hurt for the Warden and Mr. Casey to hear what he says!

MRS. CALVIN. You're right, Martin. You may sit behind the screen, Mr. Casey.

CASEY. Say, you don't think I meant that, do you?

MRS. CALVIN. Perhaps not, but I did.

CALVIN. It's too far-fetched, Mary.

MRS. CALVIN. I feel no anxiety about what Dan may tell me. [*She turns quickly to* CASEY.] Do you?

CASEY. I do not.

MRS. CALVIN. Then you won't object to doing what I ask?

CASEY. It's nonsense—wasting time for nothing.

[CALVIN *has been watching* CASEY *closely.*

CALVIN. I agree, Mary.

MRS. CALVIN. Good. Put two chairs behind the screen then. It may take some time.

CALVIN. Two!

MRS. CALVIN. Dan must feel free to talk, John. [CASEY *enjoys* CALVIN'S *dismay.*] You and Mr. Casey may sustain each other's dignity.

CALVIN. Nonsense!

MRS. CALVIN. That's just what Mr. Casey

said. Don't hesitate because of a little false pride.

CASEY. She's got us in a forked stick, Calvin.

[*There is the sound of someone outside the door.* MRS. CALVIN *stands between the two men. She appeals to* CALVIN *with a gesture.* CALVIN *replies by going behind the screen.* CASEY *follows him out of sight. There is a knock at the door.* MRS. CALVIN *draws a long breath. Then, with a quick glance at* MARTIN, *she opens the door. Keeper* FRANCIS *stands there with* DAN.

FRANCIS. The Warden said to. . . .

MRS. CALVIN. Come in. The Warden has said I may speak to Dan.

[FRANCIS *and* DAN *come inside.* FRANCIS *sees the empty room with a start.* DAN *gives one quick, suspicious glance about and drops his eyes again.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*holding out her hand to* MARTIN.] Thank you, Martin. Write to me. Good-bye.

[DAN *looks up in time to see* MARTIN *take* MRS. CALVIN'S *hand.*

MARTIN. Good-bye, Mrs. Calvin. . . . May God bless you!

[MARTIN'S *eyes travel to* DAN. MRS. CALVIN *smiles.*

MRS. CALVIN. You know Dan.

MARTIN. [*to* DAN.] Well, old pal—be good! [*He steps forward and puts out his hand. He chokes, unable to find words. Then in a low tone*—She's—white! [*He exits.*]

MRS. CALVIN. That's all, thank you, Mr. Francis. Will you wait outside?

FRANCIS. Outside?

MRS. CALVIN. I have something to say to Dan.

FRANCIS. Alone?

MRS. CALVIN. Just as you see me.

FRANCIS. But, Mrs. Calvin, it's against the rules.

MRS. CALVIN. It's never been done, I know. But I am personally responsible for Dan's safety, and for my own. If any accident should happen it will be wholly my fault.

[DAN *is interested in this view.*

FRANCIS. Well, I never. . . .

MRS. CALVIN. I'll call you.

[*She closes the door behind him although he is but half convinced. She turns to* DAN *and smiles.* DAN *looks around the room with suspicion.* MRS. CALVIN *goes to the desk and draws the chair away from it, sitting comfortably.*

MRS. CALVIN. Sit down, Dan. [*He is embarrassed and half refuses.*] Please do. We can

talk better so. [DAN *perches on the edge of a chair uncomfortably.*] You haven't been very comfortable for the last two days, have you? [DAN *scowls.*] Oh, I know all about it, and I think I understand more than you'd think. [*She pauses a moment, uncertain how to go on.*]

[DAN *does not look at her. She watches him and then throws a swift query at him.*

MRS. CALVIN. You don't like the Warden, do you, Dan?

[DAN *lifts his face to her, startled.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*following it up.*] I knew you didn't. I'm not surprised. He's been very hard with you, hasn't he? [*She pauses.* DAN'S *eyes are fastened to her face.*] He's been hard with me too, Dan.

[*Behind the screen,* CALVIN'S *face sets.* CASEY *turns to look at him. They are both unhappy and uneasy, though for different reasons.*

MRS. CALVIN. How many children did your mother say you had; three, wasn't it? [DAN *nods.*] Three. And the baby is a boy—Jimmy. [DAN *nods again, pleased that she remembers. He sits more at ease in his chair.*] I remember your mother said he had a new tooth. [*She smiles.*]

DAN. [*for the first time; gruffly.*] He was two weeks old when I saw him.

MRS. CALVIN. [*gently.*] His mother died when he came?

[DAN *nods.*

MRS. CALVIN. It's sad that women should die when their babies are born. . . .

DAN. [*looking away.*] She's better out of it.

MRS. CALVIN. But you're not better without her.

[DAN *flashes another look at her.*

MRS. CALVIN. I can't help thinking how she'd have loved little Jimmy.

DAN. Maizy's my pet.

[*Behind the screen both* CALVIN *and* CASEY *fail to see where* MRS. CALVIN *is leading. They cannot fail to be interested in the fact that she is making* DAN *talk, even though the conversation is about something which is apparently beside the point.* CASEY, *who understands her method better than* CALVIN—*for after all, her method is his method—grows increasingly uneasy.*

MRS. CALVIN. How old is Maizy?

DAN. She's ten, ma'am.

MRS. CALVIN. You told me that before, I remember.

DAN. She's a little woman. You ought to see

her, sewing on her daddy's buttons, or making him a cup of tea.

MRS. CALVIN. Like her mother, isn't she?

DAN. Just like.

MRS. CALVIN. I had a little boy, Dan—two years ago.

[DAN *waits, slightly embarrassed.*

MRS. CALVIN. He was older than your Maizy—he was twelve. We were—pals. [*She smiles.*] He used to call us that when he could scarcely talk. His name was Walter.

[*There is a tense pause. Behind the screen* CALVIN *grows stiff with fury.* CASEY *is more on edge than ever.*

MRS. CALVIN. I know how you feel about Maizy. It was that way with Walter. I never looked at him without seeing his father. He was eager, too eager, too quick, impulsive, too easily hurt by things—just like his father.

[DAN *looks up in surprise.*

MRS. CALVIN. You don't see those things in the Warden, Dan. It's hard for me to see them now. He's hidden them. But they were all there when we were married.

[*Without realizing it* MRS. CALVIN *has been pleading, not only with* DAN, *but with her husband.* CALVIN'S *face is a study*

in incredulity. CASEY *is restless.* DAN *forgets his embarrassment and suspicion; all but his interest in* MRS. CALVIN'S *simple earnestness.*

MRS. CALVIN. I see things in the Warden that you do not; just as I see much in you which the Warden cannot see.

DAN. [*with polite acquiescence.*] Yes, ma'am.

MRS. CALVIN. Walter was very like his father; too like him. They couldn't understand each other. I used to be very unhappy, sometimes, but I always hoped that Walter would grow into a fine, strong man. . . .

[DAN *nods.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*swiftly.*] Do you know how my little boy died? . . . He took poison.

[DAN *gulps.* CALVIN'S *face is set with pain. Even* CASEY *flinches.*

MRS. CALVIN. [*in a monotone.*] It came from a little thing. Walter wanted to go to the circus. His father said, no. And—Walter was rude. He spoke to his father in a way which the Warden could not forgive.

[DAN *looks at her—mute with suffering.*

MRS. CALVIN. I'd been ill. That very day Walter carried up to the medicine chest my strychnine. He knew it was poison. We'd talked about it. And so—when his father sent

him up to a dark room for punishment—he swallowed four of the little pills, Dan.

[*For a long moment* MRS. CALVIN *looks straight into* DAN'S *eyes.*

MRS. CALVIN. Strychnine. Do you know. . . .

[DAN *turns his head away.*

MRS. CALVIN. I found him that way . . . on the floor of the dark room.

[*Dumb with emotion,* DAN *turns back to her. There is silence.* MRS. CALVIN *rises and stands looking into the gray light outside the window.*

MRS. CALVIN. The Warden never understood. He does not know, as I know, just what the child was thinking. Walter was unhappy because he had hurt his father. He thought he'd been wicked. He knew that he'd made me unhappy too. And—he was afraid to stay alone in the dark. [*She turns. For the first time, her voice quivers.*] The dark is very terrible sometimes, to children.

[DAN *rises. He stands in misery, looking at her.*

MRS. CALVIN. Do you know what kept me alive, Dan? The Warden.

[DAN *darts a glance at her.*

MRS. CALVIN. I pitied him so much. My old

love for him all swept back. . . . He's tragic, Dan. He believes he's right. The truth is, he's afraid—afraid to let himself feel—afraid to believe in good, wholesome things. . . . My hopes for Walter were gone. He could never grow into a fine, gentle man. After he had come to me, I'd loved him better than my husband. But—I longed to have his father take his place again. When we came here I felt that here perhaps he might throw off his shell, and try to help the men, building up their lives instead of tearing them down.

[DAN'S *face lights in admiration. There is a moment's pause and then* MRS. CALVIN *turns to him quickly.*

MRS. CALVIN. Do you know what I want to see in this prison? Cheerful men. [DAN *looks up.*] Healthy men. Men who are helping one another. Good pals, Dan—fifteen hundred friends of the Warden. And I'd like to see the Warden an honest pal to every man here. Every man should go out better than when he came in—instead of worse. . . . Couldn't *you* go straight, Dan, if you had a chance?

DAN. What's the use? I was straight enough the first time I got sent up.

MRS. CALVIN. [*eagerly.*] Yes? Tell me.

DAN. I was living in a house with some pals—

and then—I got married. We just went to the priest. But when I went to my room to get my things, the old woman was mad. Said I couldn't leave without permission. I didn't care for her, so I went. Well—they framed me up, and sent me here for two years.

MRS. CALVIN. And your wife?

DAN. [*with infinite meaning.*] She waited. When I got out we thought everything would be right. But no one wants to give a good job to an ex-con. . . . The boys was there ready to help me if I'd help them. What could I do? It was the only chance I could find. So I took it. If I got pinched, they helped me out. They tried to get me a pardon this time.

MRS. CALVIN. Was this last sentence a fair one, Dan?

DAN. Oh, I soaked the guy, all right. But he hit me first. [*Defiantly.*] Your law's damn foolishness!

MRS. CALVIN. I don't wonder that you think so.

DAN. The Warden hated me from the first. They tipped him off, I was an old-timer. He made up his mind I was bad. [*Snarling.*] So I gave him what he was looking for!

MRS. CALVIN. Of course. We all do that.

DAN. Does he think I care a damn for his

punishment? I'll bet I can hold out as long as he can!

MRS. CALVIN. If—if the Warden helped you—if he really tried to understand you—couldn't you help him?

DAN. [*puzzled.*] Help him?

MRS. CALVIN. Oh, Dan—I want him to be a friend to all the men. He ought not to stand over them with a club! You *can* help him. You can help me! Will you?

[DAN *is pleased, even eager, but he is still a little gruff.*

DAN. How?

MRS. CALVIN. The Warden won't believe me. You're the one to do it—you and Jack—and the rest. Show him you'll stand by each other, not against him, but *with* him! Martin's been helping me . . . won't you?

DAN. I'll—I'll do what I can.

MRS. CALVIN. [*putting out her hand.*] We'll be friends—pals?

DAN. All right.

MRS. CALVIN. Help me to show the Warden his mistakes. I'll promise that no harm comes to any *friend* of yours.

[*Behind the screen,* CALVIN *draws a long, quivering breath. His face is white, and wet with perspiration, but it is set*

in new lines. CASEY *turns and stares at him.*

MRS. CALVIN. We'll trust each other. Even if—circumstances point against us, you'll trust me as I trust you. Is that a bargain? [DAN *nods.*] Dan, tell me the truth about Mr. Casey.

[CASEY *gives a quick, uneasy movement.* CALVIN *is all attention. This is the turning point for him. If* DAN *speaks frankly, and sincerely,* CALVIN'S *shell will break, and his whole philosophy be shattered. But if the man fails to meet the test, the new ideas which have been kindled by the train of circumstances, since* JACK'S *information on the night before, will be lost.*

MRS. CALVIN. Mr. Casey says you're a crook, and can't be trusted to tell the truth, Dan.

[DAN *has a momentary return of suspicion.*

MRS. CALVIN. Remember—don't be afraid to trust me. [*He looks at her longingly.*] You stick by people who stick by you, don't you?

DAN. You bet I do!

MRS. CALVIN. Jack Wilson's a friend of yours? [DAN *frowns.*]

DAN. He *was.*

MRS. CALVIN. He thinks Mr. Casey is double-crossing you.

DAN. [*bitterly.*] Jack's turned stool-pigeon.

MRS. CALVIN. He only did it to help you. He only wants you to have fair play, Dan. And you want him to have it too. If Mr. Casey is really back of all this, and you tell me that he isn't, you'll double-cross two pals—Jack and me.

[*She waits.* DAN *thinks this over.* CASEY *clenches his fists.*

MRS. CALVIN. Jack thinks you're square; so does Martin. And so do I! [*She pauses for an instant.*] Mr. Casey did manage your escape, didn't he, Dan?

[*For a moment* DAN *looks straight into* MRS. CALVIN'S *eyes.*

CASEY *tries to leap out and so prevent the answer, but* CALVIN *is prepared for this, and throwing one arm around* CASEY'S *shoulders, with his free hand over* CASEY'S *mouth, prevents his escape until after the monosyllable has left* DAN'S *lips.*

MRS. CALVIN *returns* DAN'S *gaze without flinching.*

DAN. Yes!

[CASEY *makes a violent lunge and the screen totters. The two men struggle for*

an instant. Both DAN *and* MRS. CALVIN *turn toward them.* DAN, *forgetting he is a prisoner, strides past her toward the screen. Then he turns and looks back at* MRS. CALVIN. *At this moment* CALVIN *thrusts* CASEY *back and steps out.*

DAN. [*to* MRS. CALVIN.] You tricked me! [CASEY *also appears.* CALVIN *is a changed man, and is elated in the change.* CASEY *is raging.*] It's a plant—you've double-crossed me! Ah—

MRS. CALVIN. No, Dan! Trust me! Remember—trust me!

CALVIN. [*speaking to* DAN *as one man to another.*] She's square, Dan. Trust her. [DAN *looks at him in stunned bewilderment.*] And trust me too. I've been wrong—wrong for a long while. We've been pulling different ways—it's time we pulled together. . . . you're a pal of Mrs. Calvin's. . . . I'd like her pals to be mine. I'll stand by you. Wilson's right. You have been getting a dirty deal. So have a good many others. . . . But that's over now.

[DAN *gazes at him in stunned awe.*

CALVIN. We'll just shake hands on this, Dan.

[DAN *and* CALVIN *shake hands, not without sentiment, but wholly without sentimentality.* CASEY, *who has been en-*

gaged in assembling his routed forces, sneers.

CASEY. Very touching scene!

CALVIN. [*whirling on him.*] As for you. . . .

CASEY. [*cutting in flatly.*] Now just what are you going to do about me, Warden Calvin? You can't do anything! If you've got the sense of a louse, you'll let me strictly alone. [*He goes to the desk, and takes the blue envelope from his inside pocket, removing the enclosure.*] Slide your eye along that, Mister Warden. It may give you just an idea of what you're up against. [*He hands the letter to* CALVIN *who takes it unwillingly.*] Read it—read it!

[CALVIN *reads the letter and looks up with a start to meet* CASEY'S *grin.*

CALVIN. The—[*his look shows how startled he is.*]

CASEY. [*nodding.*] The Superintendent of Prisons in this State is no fool; he knows a good thing when he sees it. He's your boss, ain't he? Well—he's mine too. He ain't going to let you turn this place into a comic supplement Sunday School. [*He points to the letter.*] Take what you want, he said—leave this when you go. . . . Well—what could *you* say when I—[*he takes the desk key from his waistcoat pocket, and opens the desk drawer, taking out papers.*]—

took these and left that order behind? [*He tosses the papers back in the drawer and slams it shut.*]

[CALVIN, *by his expression, shows that he could have said or done nothing.*

CASEY. Don't think the Superintendent is the only boss I've got. There are bigger than him. You aren't fighting me, Stephen Casey. There's more to it than that, friend Warden. Powerful men are behind—men I don't even know! They send me my orders and I jump! And don't you forget it—they'll spend money against you. This prison is too slick a thing to let slip. There's money to be made from it—it's a paying proposition! We'd be crazy to let it go without a fight! . . . You're one man—and you're fighting a machine. Drop it!

[CALVIN *is thinking hard. The windows reflect the rosy light of dawn. Of a sudden there is heard the clicking of the levers opening the cell-rows. Then there follows the sound of the men marching from the cells. At the sound* CALVIN *involuntarily straightens. He looks at* CASEY.

CASEY. [*pointing to the letter which* CALVIN *has dropped on the desk.*] You ain't got evidence of

anything. I told you to find out the difference between testimony and evidence once before. [*He turns to* DAN, *laughing nastily.*] Do you think *your* word's worth an ounce of plug-cut in any court in the country? It ain't! [*He turns back to* CALVIN.] You can't touch me.

CALVIN. [*slowly.*] No.

CASEY. Don't be a fool. Throw up the sponge, while you can, Warden. We're organized, rich. You're—one man!

[*A flash—the old fanatic look—sweeps* CALVIN'S *face. He turns to* DAN. *The sound of the men marching is beginning to die away.*

CALVIN. Dan—listen—[*the marching ceases*]—They've gone to breakfast. . . . If I stand by them, will they stand by me?

DAN. [*huskily.*] You bet they will, Warden—or we'll know the reason why!

[CALVIN *looks past* DAN *to his wife. She smiles at him and involuntarily moves nearer, but stops by* DAN, *as* CALVIN *with a smile of understanding, moves to the door.*

CALVIN. [*calling into the outer office.*] Francis! [*He turns to* CASEY.] I begin to see what I'm fighting, Mr. Casey. And I've found, I believe, the one weapon which will prevail against it.

[*He drops his hand lightly on* DAN'S *shoulder. The gesture is half unconscious.*]

[FRANCIS *stands in the doorway waiting for orders.* DAN *stands between* CALVIN *and* MRS. CALVIN. CASEY, *in spite of his bravado, is impressed.*

CASEY. Think you'll try a little brotherly love, eh? Huh—that's a joke. You're a fool. You forget they're only a lot of crooks.

MRS. CALVIN. [*flashing at him.*] We hope they'll forget it too, Mr. Casey!

[CALVIN *smiles and turns to* FRANCIS.

CALVIN. [*briskly.*] Mr. Casey will go to town by the first train. Release King and Scott—we shall not need them. They may resign by letter.

FRANCIS. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. Moyne will go to the mess-hall.

FRANCIS. Yes, sir.

CALVIN. And—in ten minutes I wish to speak to the men.

FRANCIS. Yes, Warden.

[CALVIN *nods dismissal and* FRANCIS *goes.*

CASEY. Think you'll stick it out, do you? I tell you, John Calvin, within one month there will be a new Warden appointed for Riverside Prison!

CALVIN. Riverside Prison has a new Warden,

Mr. Casey. He was appointed some fifteen minutes ago, by my wife. His name is Calvin, and if he's not enough for you and your superiors you will find fifteen hundred of his deputies in the mess-hall—at breakfast. . . . Good morning!

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